MEDIASCENE

ISSUE 28 - $1.50

SPECIAL

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

KALUTA

KIRBY

WOOD

MORROW

HINGE

MORE!

A SUPERGRAPHICS PUBLICATION

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MEDIASCENE

If you're wondering about the attitude of satisfaction that's pervading the current issues of **MEDIASCENE**, you're probably forgotten that we launched the first issue exactly six years ago.

At that time, we felt there was a need for a first-class magazine which covered a specialized area of popular culture—fantasy, science fiction, adventure, mystery and everything in between. Those early issues (under the **COMICSCENE** banner) threw a primary focus on the comics and the pulps. But as the publication grew, so too did our format, our guidelines, and the scope of our material. In no time at all, the magazine had expanded to cover paperbacks, films, TV, popular personalities and a host of other entertainments with the title change of **MEDIASCENE**.

This issue continues in that tradition by spotlighting one of America's foremost fantasy artists, Mike Kaluta. His cover art for this issue is published here for the first time—a holiday bonus for our audience—and sets the tone for that which is still to come.

Another old friend of ours captures the lead spot with a generous sampling of unpublished art liberated from the secret files of Marvel Comics' most inner sanctum. Students of comic art generally agree that anything Jack Kirby does is a cut above most other material being produced at any given time. In this case, the "anything" happens to be Kirby's comic book version of the British TV thriller **The Prisoner**.

We bow to no one in our unabashed admiration for Jack's work, and opted to take a look at the story out of simple curiosity. That, in turn, led to approaching Stan Lee for the purpose of allowing **MEDIASCENE** readers to share in that experience. Stan graciously consented to a sneak preview while promising to spring **The Prisoner** from solitary confinement and find a home for the strip somewhere in the Marvel line-up. Those equally curious and dedicated can start lining up now; visiting hours are about to begin.

To classify Gray Morrow as a science fiction artist would be extremely short-sighted under any circumstances. In the commercial art field, he has applied his considerable talents to humor, horror, westerns, adventure, fantasy, romance and a score of other areas to produce a shelfful of paperback book covers, record albums, comics, movie posters, advertisements and other material. But it would be fair to say that Gray specializes in his own brand of science fiction art, that of heroic adventure and action fantasy—and perhaps does it better than anyone else in the field.

This issue's centerspread poster gives ample evidence to that thought with an extraordinary tapestry inspired by Roger Zelazny's popular **Guns of Avalon** opus. In addition, it serves to prime readers for the upcoming Zelazny/Morrow/Preiss collaboration due for publication in the next month.

Byron Preiss, the producer and co-publisher of the package, offers a revealing insight to the anxiously-awaited **Illustrated Roger Zelazny**, and to the future of the visual novel itself. Preiss has been the major force in the execution and elevation of this newly-developing form, and, judging by the properties and projects currently under his production, will continue to maintain that status. A selection of the Gray Morrow art which accompanies Preiss' essay is only the barest indication of the range of style and format to be found within the forthcoming volume.

The definitive Michael Wm. Kaluta interview begins on the following page in a fascinating and fast-moving conversation that covers every aspect of the artist's career, from his inspirations and fan-oriented beginnings through his comics career to his current projects and latest aspirations. True to the nature of the artistic visionary, Kaluta seems to have made the best of the hard times and the lean years, using the experience as a foundation for his career instead of a crutch.

Where his fellow artists have given up their dreams of stylistic individuality while giving in to the rubber stamp superhero look demanded by the big companies, Kaluta has maintained his position as a nonconformist. Though he's the first to admit it hasn't been as much fun as it seems in retrospect (he'll show you the scars if you're particularly persuasive), he also knows that there could be no other avenue which would have trained and channeled his efforts so well.

Kaluta's candid comments about his work, his successes and failures, his friends, his fans and his future, presents a compelling portrait of one of the most remarkable talents working today—a certain source of inspiration to all those who aspire to a similar goal.

No portrait of an artist would be complete however without an ample representation of his work—and with that in mind, we herewith present a past, present and future Kaluta portfolio for further enlightenment. Like this issue's cover, *The Sentry*, much of the art reproduced within these pages has never been in print before. *The Sentry* (which we personally feel is one of the three finest Kaluta pieces we've ever seen) is available from the artist as a full-color photoprint, mailed to 17x20" in a limited edition of one hundred signed and numbered copies for $40, postpaid and insured. For the same price, collectors may also purchase a copy of **The Swords of Shahrazar** with an original watercolored frontispiece sketch tipped in. Inquiries should be made to: Wood Soda Wonder Book Editions/Dept 35/37 W 20th Street/Studio 1202/New York City/10010.

Those seriously interested in the work of Mike Kaluta and the other artists with which he shares a loft in Manhattan, will be anticipating a new book (tentatively titled **The Studio**) due for release in September of 1978. The 160-page volume, most of which will be in color, is scheduled to feature equal sections on Kaluta, Jeff Jones, Barrie Wrightson and Barry Smith. The proposed format allows for reproductions of their finest work along with biographies and background data on the studio amalgam. More on **The Studio** in future issues of **MEDIASCENE**.

Mike Hinge, one of the prime exponents of technologically-oriented science fiction art, is on hand with a powerful visualization of the season's hottest new film, **Close Encounters**. Those who know Hinge's work have witnessed a stunning correlation between his concepts and the Steven Spielberg offering.

Over the past years we've scooped the country with series of exclusives on **Close Encounters of the Third Kind**—and we're not through yet. The film, now playing to capacity crowds, is receiving a flood of publicity in national media, but many of the special effects techniques have been surpressed, and are still shrouded in mystery. Those who delight in the intricacies of fx filmmaking, will find James Ursini's coverage as fascinating as it is factual.

If the phrase "Two Man Horse" doesn't mean anything to you, you've probably never encountered the work of Bob Gould and Eric Kimball. As a team, they have produced several of the most beautiful and offbeat art products available on today's market. In a field riddled with unique approaches and styles, their product remains distinctive. With that in mind, we asked Kimball (the artist) to elaborate on their proceedings, and tapped Gould (the artist) for a sampling of his work. The result will be found within these pages. We think you'll also agree there are indeed Possibilities.

We can find no better way to wind-up the holidays than with a surprise appearance by a group of Wally Wood's most delightful characters. Bucky Ruckus and his crew of cosmic crazies stub their collective toes on a nasty sorcerer who simply refuses to get into the spirit of the season.

Bucky's Christmas Caper has been out of print for ten years. We felt the opportunity was right for an encore performance, and resurrected Woody's mini-masterpiece as a fitting climax to our annual celebration.

It is with great regret that we report the loss of one of the brotherhood of comic artists and an old friend, John Verpoorten. Both of us began our Marvel careers about the same time ten years ago. John started in the production department, and in addition to doubling as an inker, worked his way up to the top chair.

Heading any production dept is a tough job, and at Marvel, an impossible one. Nevertheless, John managed to maintain his love for the comics form throughout his tenure, and, at least with us, his attitude remained as enthusiastic at the end as it had at the beginning.

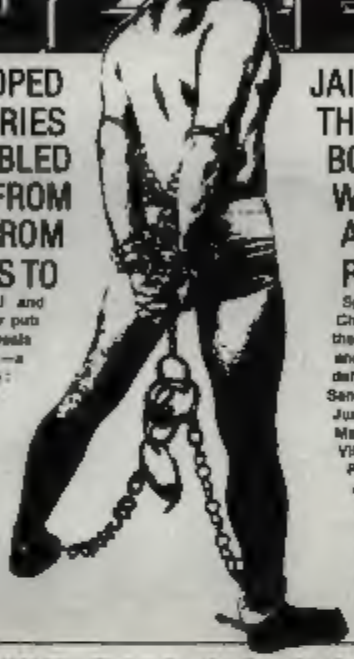
On Friday, December 16, he left the Marvel offices with a high fever and planned to take it easy that weekend. Co-worker Danny Crespi called him the following day to discover the ailment not much better. Several other friends dropped by his apartment on Sunday and got no response to their call. When John failed to appear for work or answer his phone Monday morning, Mary McFerran, his secretary, went to his apartment and requested entry from the superintendent. His body was found inside; an early coroner's report said death was possibly caused by a perforated ulcer and further complications. John was 36 years of age. He will be missed.

Next issue, **MEDIASCENE** throws a revealing spotlight on the words of science fiction. Look for a special in-depth feature on **Close Encounters**, Harlan Ellison's new TV series **Boy and his Dog**; a preview of the upcoming SF film epics; a portfolio of foreign science fiction art, and much more.

Till then, take care. ●

STERANKO

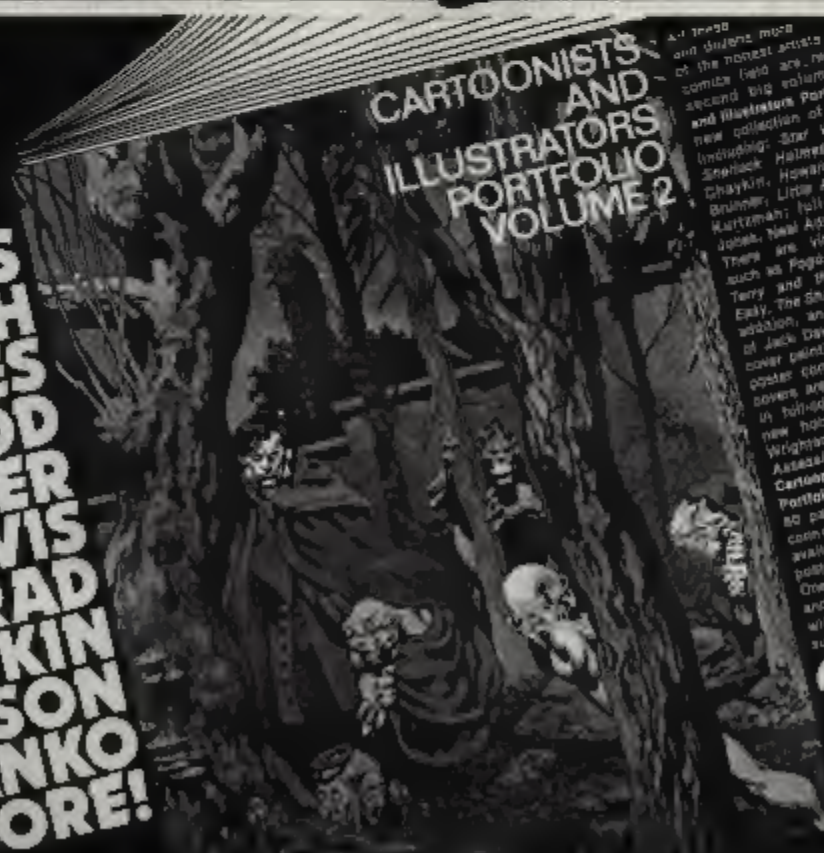
IRON PUZZLES



"TWENTY YEARS AGO, I DEVELOPED A SERIES OF SECRET THEORIES AND TECHNIQUES THAT ENABLED ME TO RELEASE MYSELF FROM ANY FORM OF RESTRAINT, FROM HANDCUFFS TO STRAITJACKETS TO JAIL CELLS. NOW, I'VE REVEALED THOSE SECRETS IN A SPECIAL BOOK WHICH I BELIEVE YOU WILL FIND TO BE FASCINATING AND FANTASTIC BECAUSE IT'S REAL! I CALL IT **IRON PUZZLES**."

IRON PUZZLES, written by STERANKO, is the most original and comprehensive book on the subject of escape magic ever published! Here, in a special collector's edition, the author reveals page after page of TOOLS, TRICKS AND TECHNIQUES—a profusion of photos, drawings and schematics including: Locksmithing Devices; The Universal Pick (9 tools in 1); The "Y" Pick; Half "Y", Special Barrel Key Device; The Pocket Knife Pick; Adjustable Double "T" Pick; Universal Handles; Picking Guns; One-hand Pin Tumbler Picks and Advanced Version; The Sneaker; The Separator; Inversion Disc with Drill Positions; Handcuff Chart; Opening Padlocks by Picking, Rapping, Drilling, Shimming, Twisting; Combination Locks and Safes; The Vault Escape; Safecracking Tools; Pulling, Peeling, Cutting, Burning, Blowing, etc.; Electronic Stethoscope; Safe-opening Micrometer; Jump Cuffs; Rope Ties and Escapes; Chains and Straightjacket Techniques; Upside-down support devices; Gaffed Jackets; The Spread Ring and other devices; Prison Escapes; The Oval Challenge; Master Methods and Solutions; Secret Picks and their Concealment; Hazards of Jail-breaking; Escape Variations and Implements; The Complete Dynamic Magic Act; Death-defying Railroad Escape; Challenge Packing Box—Underwater; Sensational High Dive; Buried Alive; The Hanged Man; Parachute Jump; Tomb of Ice; The Electric Chair; The Incandescent Man; The New Fourth Dimension Act; Building an Act—The Vital Secrets; The Master System of Publicity Stunts; Press Releases, Feature Stories and Promotional Kits; Selling the Act; Posters; Handcuff King Breakers; Lexicon of Locks and Liberation; and dozens of others. **IRON PUZZLES** is packed with autobiographical material about STERANKO that you never knew before—his most dangerous stunts, his toughest escapes. The volume comes in a specially designed *Portfolio Case*—and every book will be signed by STERANKO personally. **IRON PUZZLES** will print an edition 1000 copies. $12.50 plus $1.00 postage and handling.

original ART by ADAMS SMITH JONES WOOD FOSTER DAVIS CONRAD CHAYKIN WRIGHTSON STERANKO MORE!



2ND BIG ISSUE!

FREE THE PRISONER

1

"I am not a number! I am a free man!!"

Punctuating his raging demand for an individual identity with a slamming fist on his superior's desk, he stormed out the door and into America's 1968 television consciousness. For the next 17 weeks, he presented a bizarre, philosophic and moralistic sideview of the superspy era, and struck an unusual chord in the hearts of the viewing public, including a handful of comic book artists and writers. As a result, nearly a decade later, The Prisoner lives again!

A banner heralded his second coming: "On the television screen, this story of one man's battle against insidious power enthralled millions of viewers in this age, when the individual can find himself at the mercy of advanced technology wielded by an organized and ruthless enemy. *this book becomes important to all of us!!!*"

The caption appears on the splash page of the still unpublished Marvel Comics version of the extraordinary British teleseries **The Prisoner**, capably rendered by no less a talent than Jack Kirby. The tale of how the adaption has somehow managed to elude publication is unique, even for comics.

Some years back, the original proposal to adapt **The Prisoner** to comics form was put forth by Marvel editor Marv Wolfman. The idea seemed like a natural: a retired government agent held captive in "The Village," a sinister community made of equal parts of Dachau and Disneyland, faces a continual sanity-straining war of wits with his anonymous captors to detrain and reprogram him. With its highly imaginative visuals, idiosyncratic space-age gimmickry and offbeat plot twists, **The Prisoner** was deemed material suitable for comics treatment, and was eventually secured by Marvel as part of a nearly forgotten four year-old program to acquire the series along with other properties like **2001**, **Godzilla** and **Forbidden Planet**.

It was originally planned for Wolfman to team up with artist Gene Colan to alternately produce both adaptations and original stories for the new series. When Wolfman's schedule was overloaded, Steve Englehart was handed the scripting chores, with Gil Kane penciling the art. While still in the pencil stage, the Kane version was rejected by Stan Lee for not capturing the "feel" he had expected from the adaptation. Looking for a different approach, Lee turned the series over to Kirby, who was instructed to adapt only the first half of the initial episode.

Kirby wrote and pencilled the story, with xeroxes going to Marvel's New York offices for approval, and the original art to fellow-Californian Mike Royer for inking and lettering. After five pages had been completed and several others ruled and lettered, word came from Marvel to stop work on the series. Lee had decided that the final presentation was "somehow remote to the Marvel universe."

What remains is something of a Kirby curiosity—one of a number of completed stories relegated to the same comic limbo that claimed the artist's black romance book at DC, in addition to the Dingbats, Days of the Mob and The Sandman.

To some extent, Kirby had already adapted certain elements of the **Prisoner** concept with satisfying results in the **Fantastic Four** saga (54-57). In his **Prisoner** tale, the opportunity arises to observe a more subtle Kirby that is often obscured by his high action efforts, one which recalls some of Kirby's finest and most challenging work, that of his 50s romance, crime and mystery period.

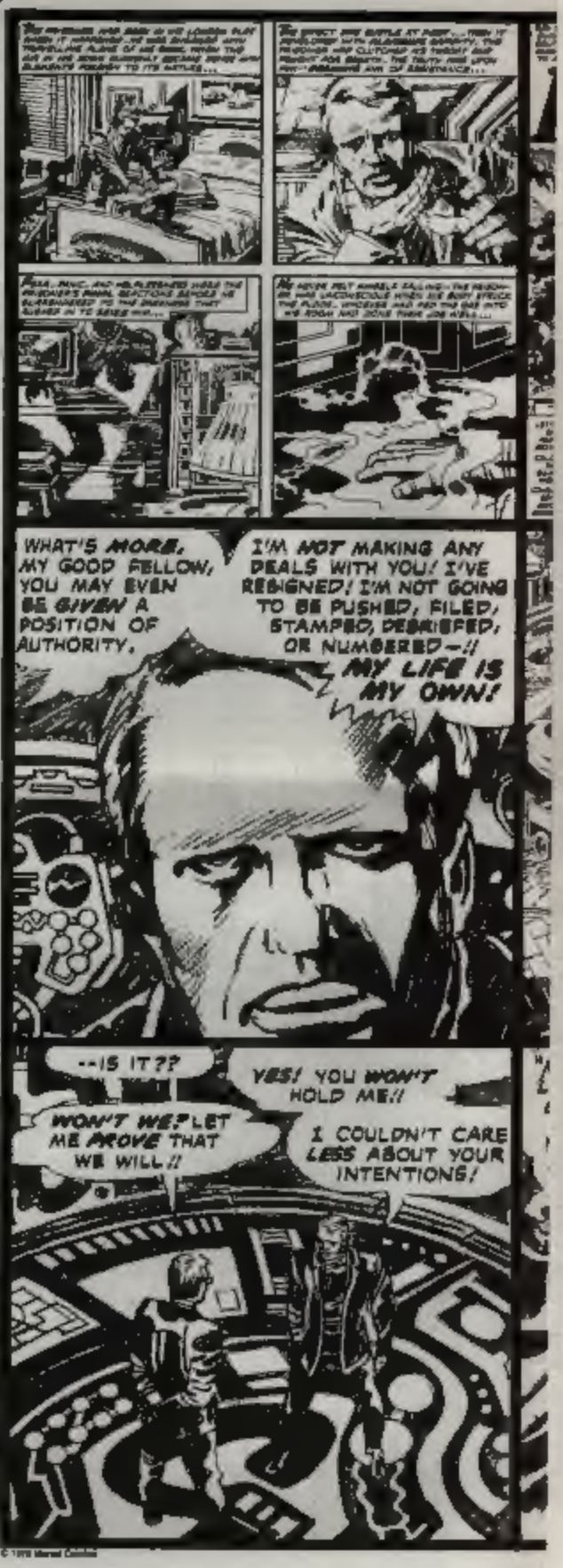
Several aspects have combined to make Kirby's **Prisoner** ineffective. The first is the material itself. The basic premise takes the entire *17 pages to set up* the conflict, what little there is, is forced, and more intellectual than physical—action is minimized, replaced by tension. Second: the gimmicks and graphics that made the tv series visually exciting are mundane by ordinary comic standards, actually *limiting Kirby instead of inspiring him*. Three: the speed and style of today's comics is *considerably accelerated* beyond those of ten years ago, adding to the "drag" inherent in the story.

Still, Kirby's approach to **The Prisoner** compares favorably to Englehart's more experimental treatment. His version began with an ambitious but disasterous internal monolog which artlessly revealed the series most closely guarded secret—the Prisoner's motives (or rather what Englehart believed them to be). The moral stance of **The Prisoner**, embodied in his defiant credo of personal freedom, was politically reformed into a "matter of honor."

The real essence of **The Prisoner**, as Kirby correctly perceived, is actually a handbook for survival in an age of cunning psychological warfare. To reinforce the intellectual allegory and abstract concepts, Kirby reaches to an artistic limit, both in range of cinematic storytelling technique and facial expression/body language to convey cynicism, suspicion and fear. His Camus-like protagonist treads the comic book realm where suspense is cerebral, where sanity and psychosis blur into perilous indistinction. Apparently, it is the type of story that "cannot" be illustrated in the comic format to satisfactory effect—yet 17 pages exist.

As for the future, whither **The Prisoner**? Stan Lee has loosely promised that the story will probably run somewhere, "as a back-up feature or perhaps in FOOM."

In this exclusive **MEDIASCENE** presentation, we've delivered the case as is: a fascinating experiment suspended in limbo. Perhaps this gem of a thinkpiece "talkie" deserves better than obscure exile. Judge for yourself and then ponder: what shall be the ultimate fate of **The Prisoner**?●


WHAT'S MORE, MY GOOD FELLOW, YOU MAY EVEN BE GIVEN A POSITION OF AUTHORITY.
I'M NOT MAKING ANY DEALS WITH YOU! I'VE RESIGNED! I'M NOT GOING TO BE PUSHED, FILED, STAMPED, DEBRIEFED, OR NUMBERED—!!
MY LIFE IS MY OWN!
--IS IT??
YES! YOU WON'T HOLD ME!!
WON'T WE? LET ME PROVE THAT WE WILL!!
I COULDN'T CARE LESS ABOUT YOUR INTENTIONS!

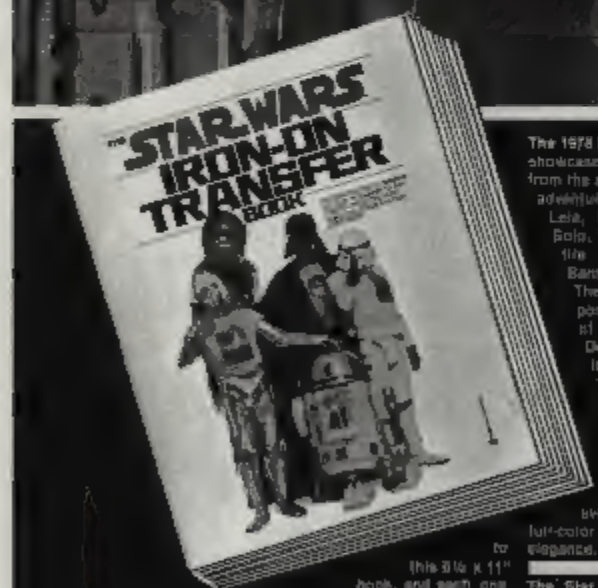
© 1978 Marvel Comics

THE PRISONER
NUMBER TWO" IS NOT DETERRED. HIS FINGER LEAPS FORWARD AND PRESSES A WALL BUTTON...
NEVERTHELESS, I SHALL PROVE MY POINT!
AS YOU WISH-- AFTER ALL, I COULD BE CONSIDERED A CAPTIVE AUDIENCE!!

FORCE YOURSELF!

Putting a man on the moon wasn't enough! It took **Star Wars** to make the world race for space! SUPERGRAPHICS is proud to present this selection of **Star Wars** books and posters, representing the first and finest photos and art available from the spectacular science fantasy space epic. More will be ready in the months to come, and these are the best of the items currently on the market.

If any single piece of art truly captures the spirit and adventure of **Star Wars**, it's this fantastic full-color poster by the brothers Hildebrandt. Symbolic, heroic, realistic and colorful, this **Star Wars Poster** is a brilliantly executed rendering of Luke Skywalker and Princess Leia defying the star-smashing power of Darth Vader. This poster is being sold for $5.00 and more in many stores, but you can get yours now for only $2.00 plus .50 postage.



Get Star Wars off your mind and onto your chest! **The Star Wars Transfer Book** is packed with full-color iron-on transfers from the hottest science-fiction fantasy film of the decade. There are 24 pages to this 8½ x 11" book, and each one is an exciting photo or illustration that can be ironed on to your t-shirt or sweater. This fabulous selection of transfers will delight every **Star Wars** fan, and be a sell out at $2.95 plus .50 postage. Darth Vader, Luke Skywalker, R2-D2, C-3PO, and all the rest are included, ready to travel their way to your door.

The 1978 Star Wars Calendar is a showcase of full-color photos from the senses-shattering space adventure. Here are Princess Leia, Luke Skywalker, Han Solo, Chewbacca and on with the menagerie of Jawas, Banthas and Sandpeople. There's even a full-color poster size centerspread of See-Threepio and Artoo Detoo, and the calendar itself, which proclaims "May the Force be with you—all through the year." Each **1978 Star Wars Calendar** is 12" x13" in size, and opens to a total height of 24 inches, every month. The cover is full-color with a dash of silver for elegance. $4.95 plus .55 postage.

The Star Wars Portfolio is the definitive collection of full-color production paintings by artist/designer Ralph McQuarrie. This is an amazing selection of 21 color plates displaying McQuarrie's powerful designs and renderings, most of which were used by George Lucas in preparation for his spectacular Star and imaginative machinery are all intricately painted, and often present fresh new points of view in tight, dynamic compositions. There are even a few scenes and characters which did not show up in the film, but are too good to be left out. **The Star Wars Portfolio** reproduces these magnificent pieces of art suitable for framing, approximately 7"x15" each in a quality folder package—a gallery of behind-the-scenes graphics from the sci-fi film of the decade for just $7.95 plus .55 postage.

The Star Wars Sketchbook showcases the work of Joe Johnston, one of the technical artist/designers from the movie. His drawings combine futuristic concepts with practical technological insight, and occasionally flash with unexpected humor. This 96-page volume of Johnston's dazzling art not only shows **Star Wars**' early development, but also captures the vitality and excitement that eventually found its way to the screen. A stunning exhibition of art designed for the stars—only $4.95 plus .55 postage and handling.

Want to build an R2-D2 robot? Or maybe a full-size Millennium Falcon space freighter? Then you'll need a set of **Star Wars Blueprints**, twelve authentic separate designs that tell everything there is to know about the technical aspects of **Star Wars**' marvelous machinery. The **Blueprints** package is 7½"x9" in size, and each print unfolds to 30"x [illegible] packed with diagrams and specifications. Priced at $6.95 plus .55 postage. **The Star Wars Blueprints** will be ready in November. You really can't blast off without them!

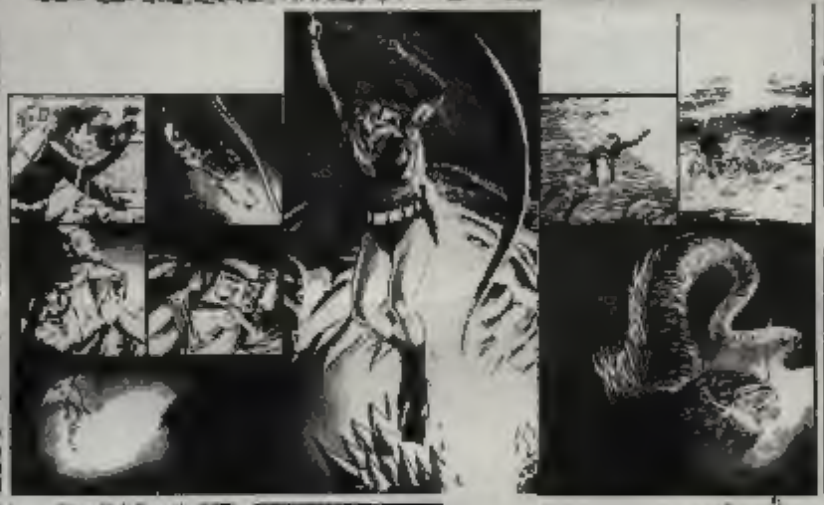
The Newspaper of Science Fiction and Fantasy is a brand-new tabloid publication which has devoted its entire first issue to just one subject—**Star Wars**. This special edition features 24-pages of facts, photos and behind the scenes action. The spaceships, robots and creatures are exhaustively examined, with rare pictures and unknown facts to stimulate the imagination. There is even a full-color **Star Wars** centerspread featuring Luke, Obi-Wan, Han and Chewbacca all for $1.00 plus .50 postage.

NINE VISIONS IN AMBER

The graphic story field has long been a home for science fiction, but rarely has science fiction been a home for the graphic story. The major comic book characters of the past forty years have their roots in **Amazing** and **Astounding**; features such as Superman were directly inspired by the work of Philip Wylie and Edmond Hamilton.

The influence of comics on science fiction is less obvious. "New wave" masters Harlan Ellison and Michael Moorcock are among those whose respect for the superheroic genre is reflected in specific stories. Writers Larry Niven and Arthur Byron Cover have gone so far as to build entire pieces around comics characters (albeit in a more whimsical fashion). Yet the graphic story medium, the actual form, has been largely ignored as a structure in which to produce new and serious work.

With the publication of the **Illustrated Roger Zelazny**, the relationship between science fiction and the graphic story takes an important step forward. Building on earlier experiments in adaptation and design, such as EC's Ray Bradbury shorts and Roy Thomas' short-lived **Unknown Worlds of Science Fiction**, this new book approaches the work of a modern sf talent in an excitingly different fashion.

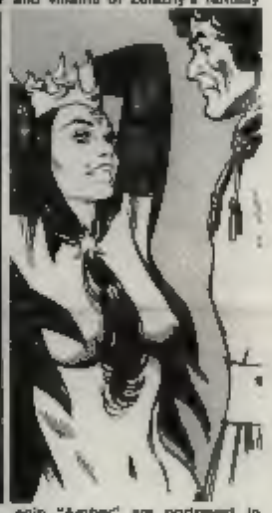


Production of the material for the book is the result of a three-way collaboration between Gray Morrow, noted illustrator; Byron Preiss, graphic story producer; and Zelazny. The three have developed an innovative series of illustrated frameworks. Four tales from the author's "best-loved" list were selected for adaptation: "The Doors of His Face, the Lamps of His Mouth," "A Rose for Ecclesiastes," "Rock Collector," and "The Furies." A new story, twenty-three pages featuring Shadowjack, Zelazny's gothic hero, was scripted by the author.

Unlike much of the sf graphic story output in the past, **The Illustrated Zelazny** has taken pains to reflect the environments, costumes and characterizations of the author's original work. Using an unusual combination of modular panels, sophisticated text-and-illustration and modern design, the book gives an evocative portrait of Zelazny's fantasy realm—the turbulent seas of Venus, a remote station on Mars and a barren asteroid. In addition, Gray Morrow produced a fabulous series of murals—graphic tapestries based on Corwyn and the Amber world.

The Illustrated Roger Zelazny represents an effort to merge some meaningful science fiction with quality illustration. In doing so, it enhances the work of both writer and artist. The book is an effective collaboration, enabling us to see one vision of Zelazny's work on paper. It sets a standard for other titles and moves both mediums a step closer to the production of new graphic stories with the conceptual weight of the best sf.

In this issue of **MEDIASCENE**, we offer an exclusive glance at Morrow's work with Zelazny. Gallanger, the main character in "A Rose for Ecclesiastes" encounters a Martian guard. Elsewhere, the heroes, heroine and villains of Zelazny's fantasy epic "Amber" are portrayed in scenes from "The Guns of Avalon."



The book, **The Illustrated Roger Zelazny** will be released in a hardcover limited, numbered edition from Baronet Publishing Company in late Winter. **Heavy Metal** will preview the book in its January '78 edition, the first time the magazine has devoted 20 color pages in one issue to the serialization of a work. Zelazny and Morrow themselves will autograph the hardcover copies, which will also feature a special tipped-in color plate.

The renaissance of deluxe illustrated editions continues in grand style. Autograph parties are planned for the book on both coasts, and Mike Friedrich, maverick California publisher, has a tie-in cover and partial serialization planned for early 1978, appearing in either **Star Reach** or his newest magazine, **Imagine**.

As an advancement in book design and packaging of the graphic story in America, **The Illustrated Zelazny** will meet and exceed the standards set abroad. It's all part of the growing dignity being accorded the comics medium in the United States.●

Byron Preiss

© 1977 Byron Preiss Visual Publications

Michael William Kaluta was born to the nomadic life of an Air Force kid in Guatemala City, Guatemala, on August 25, 1947, and for the next twelve years, rambled up and down the State's Eastern Seaboard. "Any Air Force brat can chuckle with secret feelings of superiority when he remembers the base dump in which we got to play with entire junked airplanes. All you had to do was stoop down to fill your pockets with the most amazing paraphernalia." Mike finally settled in Virginia as the 60s unfolded, and studied abstract expressionism at the Richmond Professional Institute from 1966 to 1968. Moving to New York City in 1969, Kaluta embarked on a severely individualistic career, sharing his goals (and his digs) with Jeff Jones and Berni Wrightson. At one point, the two rooms on West 79th Street simultaneously sheltered the three artists in addition to Steve Harper, Al Weiss, Vaughn Bode, Larry Todd, Rick Bryant, Steve Hickman and a host of other artists, wives, and girlfriends. That period has since become known as "The Good Old Days, or, Good Lord! (CHOKE)." By 1971, Kaluta understandably spent several "years of seclusion" before joining the studio triumvirate of Jones, Wrightson, and Barry Smith. His wide range of interest has encompassed art from comic books to posters, from magazine illustrations to record albums. Highly personable with an engaging sense of humor, he is equally at ease discussing anything from music to movies with an individual or an auditorium of spectators. His extraordinary fusion of Nouveau, Deco and Contemporary styles have thrust him into the front line of America's top fantasy illustrators.●

MEDIASCENE: Let's start at the beginning. How did you get into the business?

MIKE KALUTA: It really began in 1967 when I first met Jeff Jones and Berni Wrightson at the *World SF Convention* at the Statler Hilton in New York. I came up with Steve Hickman and Steve Harper.

There was this little kid running around selling drawings by Berni Wrightson. We looked at them and flipped out! Shortly thereafter, we met Berni himself. He won the drawing award that year, and Jeff had won the painting award, so we joined up with them. They saw *our* stuff and really dug it. That's when we met Krenkel and Frazetta—and things were never the same after that!

Later, we found out that our room was right next to theirs. We went up as a group, and they looked over our stuff, commenting on it. The next night we got to see about 25 or 30 of Frank's paintings that he had brought to the hotel.

At that point, Frazetta had no idea of how people were knocked out by his stuff, so he was taken aback by our enthusiastic reaction. We were just a roomful of people going nuts over art. You couldn't ask for more, right at the beginning. Instead of being in the business for 20 years, and then finally meeting your heroes, we got socked right at the beginning!

MS: Frazetta had a profound impact on many careers. Just how strongly did he affect and influence your early artistic growth and development?

MK: I used to *wait* for the Frazetta stuff. It ruled my life! Harper, Hickman and I just *had* to go down to the bookstore together to see if there was any new Frazetta out!

He was always at the "top of the wave," except that at the time there was *no wave*—it was *him*! And when you looked at a new piece, it was so right that you said, "I've known this for years—but I've never seen anyone do it!" That was the thing that struck me about it.

I remember when **Conan the Usurper** came out! A *brown* painting—just knocked us out. We took it home and studied it for about *four days*. And that doesn't mean we just *looked* at it. We spent four days of *solid* study on it, finding all the little facts and things he had put in.

We felt that we knew these men—Krenkel, Williamson, Frazetta— without having met them, because we studied their work so much. And it turned out that Alex Ar. I'd read them. Their eyes just the people we had imagined, only more so! They were so much *fuller* than even our fantasies.

The reason that I got going toward comics was meeting Al Williamson at Phil Seuling's 1968 *Convention*. Al had this job he was working on for National, and was bogged down on it. He had seen my *Eyes of Mars* story, and was impressed, as well he should have been, because I had been heavily influenced by his style.

He took me under his wing and sent the script down to me while I was still in Virginia. I stretched it from eight pages to eleven, working in a lot more jungle, beats, apemen, all the things that Al is known for—I had actually overdrawn it. I was trying to impress the master, and of course, I didn't have anywhere near the talent to do so at the time. Eventually, only three panels were used from that layout.

In January of '69, when I came to New York, I went straight to Al's place, and as worked on the *story for* about two weeks. It was a tremendous experience. It was through Al that I got to see Dick Giordano, and Dick sent me to Charlton. That was the first pro job I did, *Great Battles of History—Shiraz!*

I got back to Dick while he was at National, usually rolling up there in the company of Berni. I'd go hang around with my [illegible] in my sketchbook. One time Dick came out to see Berni and I mentioned, "Say, if you've got a one or two-pager lying around..."

And there it was! He handed it to me and said, "Go to town; see what you can do!" I don't believe they ever published that job, but they did run the next two in **House of Mystery** and **House of Secrets**. And that started the ball rolling.

Shortly after, I got involved in **Web of Horror**, with Jeff, Berni and Bruce Jones, just before the publisher disappeared with a lot of artwork.

MS: Somehow you managed to scrape up enough work to keep you busy though.

MK: What really helped at that time were the fanzines, which, for about two years running, helped all of us exist. They paid several dollars per page for things we wrote and drew ourselves—freedom unlimited. But there was no money anywhere else, because of the recession.

MS: Were there any other influences outside of comic artists?

MK: I was impressed with all the art history that I took while still in school. However, most of the artists from whom I drew my influence came from the commercial field, mostly turn-of-the-century artists: Maxfield Parrish, mostly for his symbolical layout; Alphonse Mucha, the French poster artist; Franklin Booth,

...the others.

MS: You always seemed to be straining against the restrictions of the comic book medium, any comment?

MK: What I was not doing was keeping up on the deadlines, strictly on **The Shadow**. With *Carson of Venus*, no one up there knew I was doing it except the editor and myself, and the series was just killed outright because of money. They began using Filipino artists, paying $25.00 a page for finished art, lettering, the works. I couldn't live on that, even though it was only five pages. But I considered it because I loved the strip so much.

MS: About your comics career, just how did you find the field, on a personal level?

MK: Well, when I finished your interview with Doug Moench and Paul Gulacy (**MEDIASCENE 20**), I found it very depressing and very true. What I personally would add to it though would be the absolute thrill of drawing.

MS: Even if you had to knock out a job overnight?

MK: The only "gotta get it done" piece I was ever involved with was the **Shadow** 3 with Berni—and it's hailed as the best of the bunch.

No, I never got to the point of bashing out anything. The only skeletons in my closet are grim rattlers of insufficient talent. But don't take me wrong. I have to admire guys like Doug and Paul, ...to stick themselves to an inhuman grind and still do quality work.

The company policies toward production at National were never as frantic as Marvel's which is why I was a rare guest at the Bullpen. The hassles at National became a game for the quick-witted and the dramatic, the phantoms and the greased pigs. We transformed our bellyaches into laughter and tricks (we being Berni, Neal, Al Weiss and myself). Our boss was accessible, and editors like Joe Orlando and Julie Schwartz would go to bat for us—they were open to persuasion and conviction.

The brassier we got, the more respect we received, and the more we worked our asses off, it was great fun.

MS: What kind of a work schedule did you keep?

MK: I rarely ever worked during the day. During the comics period, my studio was in my home. I'd just jump out of bed, put my head under the tap, and go for it! Even today, I wake up at five p.m., I miss meetings I have to go to, etc. But I find that I do my best work at night, alone, just coffee, cigarettes and my drawing board.

MS: I was going to ask if music has anything to do with whatever you produce.

MK: There are pieces of music that trigger certain thoughts. The early Pink Floyd albums, **The Pipers at the Gates of Dawn** and **Saucerful of Secrets**—those two albums, chiefly.

MS: Don't you find there's a backwash from the Kirby years, a very stale sameness about a lot of today's comics?

MK: Yeah, I wouldn't particularly note that it's from Kirby though. When I was reading comics, it was all from Joe Kubert. I got into the Steve Ditko stuff too. I see very little backwash from that, but I'd like to see more of it.

MS: Ditko must certainly be one of the top comic technicians. He gets right to the heart of the matter, probably as well as any two or three other men in the business.

MK: Right. That's something that came up in a discussion that we had with Howie Cheykin, saying that Neal Adams *is not* a comic book artist, Steve Ditko *is* a comic book artist, and to me this is patently obvious. Now, Neal can do beautiful comic books, but he's not a comic book artist. He's illustrative, that's something else.

MS: Take it one step further: how do you feel about the Adams wave of imitators?

MK: I think those guys with their abysmal figures—the Adams cliches of the gritting teeth and the cross-hatched cheekbones—there's no drawing in it. It's like things *pasted on* the figure. Looking at it from the artist's sight, it offends me. These guys are in trouble, it's going to hit them in another six months to ...go. They'll have to forget all of it.

MS: The really talented ones will use it as a stepping stone, of course.

MK: Sure. I've gotta add that I, just like any of the guys up here at the studio, borrowed from whoever happened to be our heroes at the time and just pasted on, exactly the same way. It didn't last too long, and it's grown now to a point where even the guys who inspired the work can't really see the influence that remains. If I go up to Roy Krenkel and say, "Well, what about this?" He'll go, "Yeah, yeah, I guess you're right." Or Frank's wife says, "I can't see anything of Frank in your work." And I say, "What about this?" All of a sudden she'll say, "Ah, I see what you're doing."

MS: This brings out another point. Have you ever reacted to being called a Frazetta imitator?

MK: Well, that just never really came up. On a drawing I recently did for an ad, someone came to me and said, "Are consciously swiping Williamson in this?" It blew my mind! What I was doing was going back to the familiar cliches I'd gleaned from Frazetta, Williamson, and Krenkel, and just put them into a single drawing. Apparently, because of the way I'd done it, this one person had felt that it was a Frazetta or Williamson rip-off. I was very surprised and I was kind of pleased, so I copped to it completely and said, "Yes! I ...arm, look at that expression, look at those pants, look at those boots." It doesn't bother me in the least, because I don't have to rely on them for a crutch.

MS: In that case, describe your own style, the Kaluta style—it compares more to Heinrich Kley than Frazetta. It's a scratchier line, a sketchier line. Tell me how that style developed, because it's so far away from a comic style as well as almost everything in commercial illustration.

MK: I can sum it up by adding to it. While playing softball, I kept hitting pop flies. Marv Wolfman yelled at me, "Don't hit pop flies!" I said, "That's all I can hit!" And that's the way it is with drawing.

I've always been in love with Frazetta's line, and I've seen drawings of his that were anatomically embarrassing, but as far as the line control goes they're still the most incredible things I've seen. I just didn't have that facility; I don't think I'd like to have it now, but there was a time when I would have sold my soul to have that line. The way it seems to have developed, I just kept hacking away at the art of drawing.

MS: Are you talking about not consciously trying to look like Williamson, Frazetta, or Krenkel, but trying to establish your own style, or simply trying to just get something down on paper?

MK: Something down on paper. When I draw, I scribble. I just

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FIVE FANTASTIC FRAZETTAS

keep scribbling, and slowly a form will come out of it. draw through but just feeling mass. I don't feel form as much. When I draw a figure, I can't block out a little head, put on a tail for the neck, a large shape for the rib cage, a small box for the hip and so forth. I just start drawing, scribbling. Sometimes I'll scribble a whole figure. But often I'll just start with a face, or with the way I want a chest to look and I'll try to tack a head on it.

In my early days of comic work, which means, until the last issues of **The Shadow**, I still had trouble putting the rest of the figure onto the piece I had chosen to draw. And when it finally came, it was a girl. It wasn't like I knew exactly what I want to do.

Working in my sketchbook, I'll just outline a figure very quickly and it'll hold space. when I'm trying to get an angle, I'll have to use the eraser. don't construct at that point. It's just doing an outline, and the whole figure is there in that line.

In my later work, I've tried desperately to get away from the outline. I'm a line artist, not really a tonal artist. like to work in tone, but I'll fall back on the line because. really enjoy it.

MS: Do you prefer pen or brush?

MK: I prefer the pen, but still like the feel only a brush can give. Drawing with a pen is like drawing with a pencil for me. just dip it in and draw. With a brush, you're working more in three dimensions, you get to push the brush down, pull it up, and maneuver around.

MS: For the people who like to know these things, Mike, what kind of pens do you use?

MK: It's a Hunt or Gillotte artist's pen.

MS: How about color?

MK: I'm technically color blind, according to the Army color tests.

MS: Is this possibly a reason why you have more of an affinity for line work than tonal work?

MK: Very possibly.

MS: How is this reflected in the color sense that you've exercised in your work? **Behind Neptune's Throne** is a completely different kind of piece than **Why He Doesn't Sleep at Night**.

MK: Well, what see when look at most of my work is a stained glass effect. The piece you mentioned **Behind Neptune's Throne** falls out of that category because of the muted tone. My oil paintings fall out of that category because there is some actual rendering in the oil paint itself.

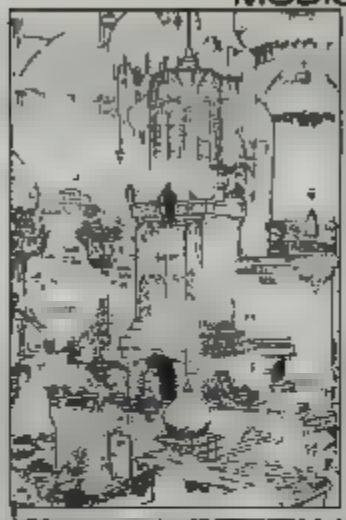
MS: So you basically prefer flat color and its use with a black holding line. How long do you work on a poster, let's say from the initial concept to the finish?

MK: From the initial concept? Years. Almost every one I generally do a sketch which generates a thought.

MS: How about the actual piece itself, the time spent on the board?

MK: Six weeks.

MS: Let's talk about your concept of women. Roy Krenkel draws voluptuous, zaftig, even fat women depending on what



one is used to in women. You have a very slim concept of women. Could you tell us why?

MK: There's something about feeling muscle and bone. For me personally physically touching a woman is more appealing than just kneading hunks of round flesh. The women in my drawings come straight out of my head. I don't think much about women in general when I'm doing a drawing, just about the woman I'm drawing at the time. Often it's the space they're occupying in the picture that's the most important thing. Sometimes they come out as idealizations.

MS: Do you find yourself unconsciously idealizing as you're sketching?

MK: Only on rare occasions, when I get off on a tangent I love to draw, but hopefully I'll never draw the way I want to because if I do, then maybe I'll just stop progressing. We know lots of people who've done that.

MS: Becoming complacent with their artwork.

MK: Sure, all of a sudden where's the fun? At this point, I can't see myself doing that, because any time that label's been placed on me, I've had a very strong reaction against it. It's like just being out to make a buck.

MS: You seem to put up a lot of resistance to making a buck.

MK: Only when it becomes the end-all. I've been talking to a young artist who's interested solely in the money and he's not talking my language at all.

MS: What would you say was your strongest motivating factor at this point? It certainly doesn't seem to be money. Would it be, say the glory, the applause, or the satisfaction of getting it done yourself, even if no one at all saw it—just the fact that it was produced by you created as it never would have been had you never existed?

MK: If I said that it was simply for me and not for everybody else, I'd be a hypocrite. That's about my strongest objective—to create a reality, on a dimensional surface. But I'd rather draw a little reality that is, in fact, complete fantasy and try to make it as close to believability as possible without making it mundane.

MS: Do you ever envision a day when you might do just portraiture instead?

MK: I can envision a day when I'll do portraiture but not just portraiture.

Barry Smith had classified me as a decadent because of the imagery that put in my pictures. I'd gladly accept the term, knowing the decadent artists as I do. The overabundance the lushness of the imagery is a real necessity for me.

MS: Are you saying it's a world that you live in?

MK: No, it's a world that I'm exploring. With Vaughn Bode, all those little characters that he came up with, were a part of the fantasy world he'd grown up in.

I don't live these things. I don't dream like my pictures. When I'm drawing, I'm finding more and more just coming out of my mind. Of course, many of them can be traced to influences. They exist, and they create a satisfaction inside me while I'm doing it.

MS: Let's talk about posters for a minute. What do you feel is your very best poster? Let me qualify that: the piece that is most Kalutia.

MK: The piece that is most me is **Why He Doesn't Sleep at Night**. That's the most of me that I've ever put into a piece. **The Sacrifice**, my Conan piece—that's me attempting to take a character that I've seen so many different ways and do it in my way.

MS: You seem to be more of a single illustration man than a comic artist.

MK: All along, that was it. I had a lot of trouble at National because of that.

MS: Why bother even wasting your time, since you didn't feel suited for it? Or was it the challenge that interested you?

MK: No, it wasn't really a challenge. It was the only way I could do a lot of drawing, and still make some money at it. Comics enabled me to learn to draw better.

MS: You mean like getting paid for learning.

MK: I would suggest to anybody out there, if they want to learn to draw, ought to start with comics. But they should keep their wits about them. Insist they get into too many cutbacks and stay there. Once you get that under your belt you can do paintings, you can do anything you want. You have that storehouse to choose from.

MS: It seems as though you're doing more of what you want in your commercial work outside of comics.

MK: Yeah, that's true. That's the answer to it, guess, so anyone who wants to know "will you draw comics again?" Not until I've had my fill of these big

KEY TO ILLUSTRATIONS:

A) Rough Trade/Saturday Night—drawn on assignment in '75 for the SF Book Club mailer. It is presently being rendered for publication as a poster due in Spring '78. The two pants with all the eyes are really ladies.

B C) D) Swords of Shahrazar—cover and interior illustrations.

E) Frankenstein's Bird

F) The Sentry—original sketch for the philosophim.

G) Apprenticeship—splash page.

H) At the Stroke of Midnight—pencil sketch for a projected poster.

I) J) The Gardner—panels from a 1970 fairytale.

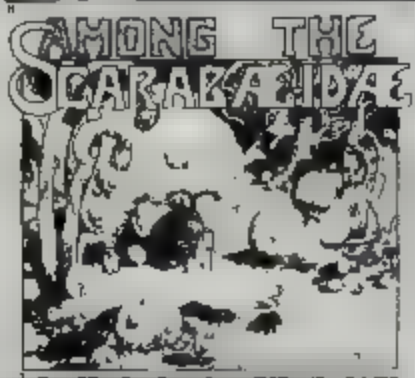
K) Catgirl—idea sketch, one of the artist's favorites.

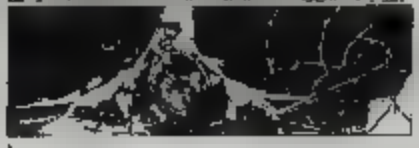
L) Among the Scarabaeidae—1970 fantasy.

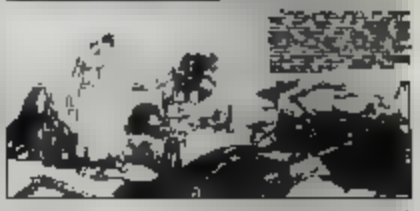
M) Sketchbook page, Metropolis—layer of the Club of the Sons. A tossing out ideas sketch, a necessary step before actual conceiving can begin.

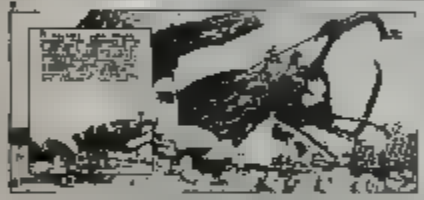
N) Sketchbook page Metropolis—the head and hand are first designs for cover stamping, a drawing embossed in silver "so something nice shows when the dust jacket gets lost."

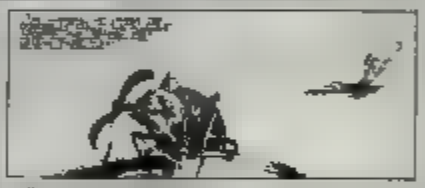
O) Sketchbook drawing

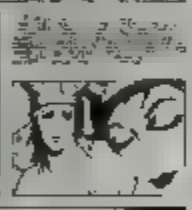


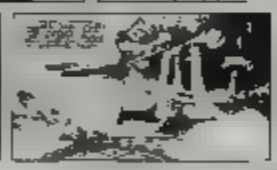


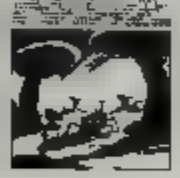


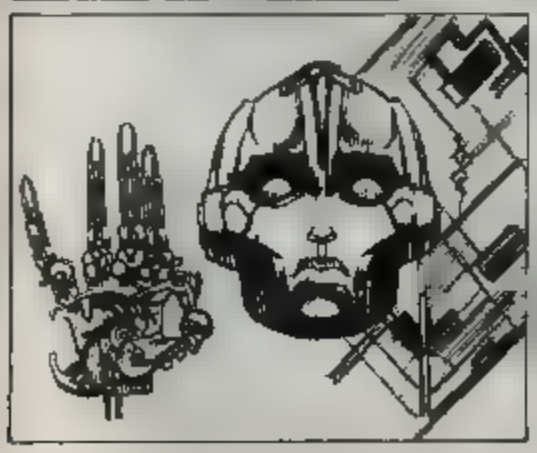












pictures.

MS: A year or so ago, Smith, Jones, Wrightson and yourself moved into a loft in midtown Manhattan, a kind of communal studio. What holds you to the group here? A similar philosophies, similar interests, or what?

MK: Actually our philosophies and interests are only similar in a small way. But there is a binding unity because we all really believe in our work--too much. As a unit we do nothing together except have dinner and argue art. We reinforce each other by being as different as we are from each other.

MS: What do you feel is your place, your status amongst the rest of the artists in the studio, as far as commercial and personal success?

MK: Oh, dunno. Can answer that last.

MS: Why do you say that? Or let me put it another way. In what order do you structure the studio? Who would you put first?

MK: That's pretty difficult. I'll do it this way. I'll pick out the virtues that each of us has. Barry is absolutely committed to what he's doing. His study in what he works on, and the agony he goes through to do what he does, puts him far beyond what I go through with my work. He's the king, as far as that goes.

Jeff is kind of a free sensuality and Jeff bubbles. He's like a primal stew. It steams and bubbles, then all of a sudden, BAM, it's there. And you go like WOW, where did that come from? Then he'll proceed to tell you exactly where it came from.

Berni, on the other hand, makes money. His covers sell books and editors know it. I've seen Berni finish three drawings in six days. Look at him over there and he has this expression on his face, intense concentration sweating blood. You say something to the guy, you have to repeat it three times before he hears you, because he is completely in that world. He is totally absorbed in his work.

MS: Just what impact and influence do you feel you and the studio crew--Smith, Wrightson, Jones--are having or will have on the art of the future?

MK: Giving some thought to that question, realize how much of an ongoing part of the mid-60s we all are. All four of us grew out of that period and must be related to, at least partially in those terms. I must say also that Barry comes from a different block than Jeff, Berni, Hickman, Harper or myself in his early comic days. His major influence was Jack Kirby--which has since been replaced by the pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, the masters of neo-classicism and the top symbolist painters of the 19th century. The rest of us followed Frazetta towards the same goals over the same horizon, we're just paddling along different tributaries of the same river.

As for our influence on other artists, I feel that it may take years to perceive. I know that it is very rare for someone to mention Berni and not add on my work. Barry's, Jeff's. For that matter a mention of any of us will bring up Williamson, Krenkel and Frazetta. We all work on the same pyre of fantasy. We all keep adding to an ongoing effect. If somehow one of us, or all of us, end up affecting the world, it will be the job of the future to pinpoint the edges of our influences and our influence.

MS: Three of you are working on major book projects. Wrightson's doing **Frankenstein**, Smith's doing...?

MK: He was going to do **Tristram and Isolde**.

MS: ...and you're doing **Metropolis**. Why did you choose that project? I mean do you realize the implications of its theme? It's a heavy socio-political statement on economics, class systems, etc. Is this a motivating factor?

MK: What's motivating me is the fact that you could draw a picture for every sentence in that whole book. It's a Big Little Book, only more so. You could put one paragraph on a page.

Metropolis stirs my emotions and not so much from the political speech-making or the ideas that are brought forth, but from the emotional visions. Theo von Harbou creates by repetition of the poetry the men marching to work, marching from work, the repetition of what Maria is and what the Robot is becomes.

MS: Do you have anything else in the works--short-term projects that you'll also be engaged in between now and the completion of **Metropolis**?

MK: The problem is that they're all long-term projects! I'm doing 25 watercolors based on the **Swords of Shahrazar** book. They'll all be linked together to form one continuous visual narrative. At present this is incomplete.

MS: Are there ever any points of despair?

MK: There are points of despair every other day. Any artist can tell you it's always a crisis, so in my kind of a trip, because you deal with things that are deeply inside of you, trying to bring them out. You feel and see things inside yourself and when they don't come out right away, you feel robbed.

MS: Would you say that it's worse now, or better since you started?

MK: Better much better!

MS: Are you striving for security?

MK: No, because if you're secure, then you don't fight for it. I've got the fear of becoming like other people that have just stopped striving and growing.

MS: Can you summarize why Mike Kaluta does what he does?

MK: Why Mike Kaluta Doesn't Sleep at Night? It's a chain of events. As I mentioned earlier about the way I think, that's the way my life runs, go with the flow.

MS: Do you have any specific, concrete goals that you would like to accomplish?

MK: Yes, simply want to draw better. I wouldn't mind setting the world on fire, but I'd want to do it knowing that I deserved the heat!

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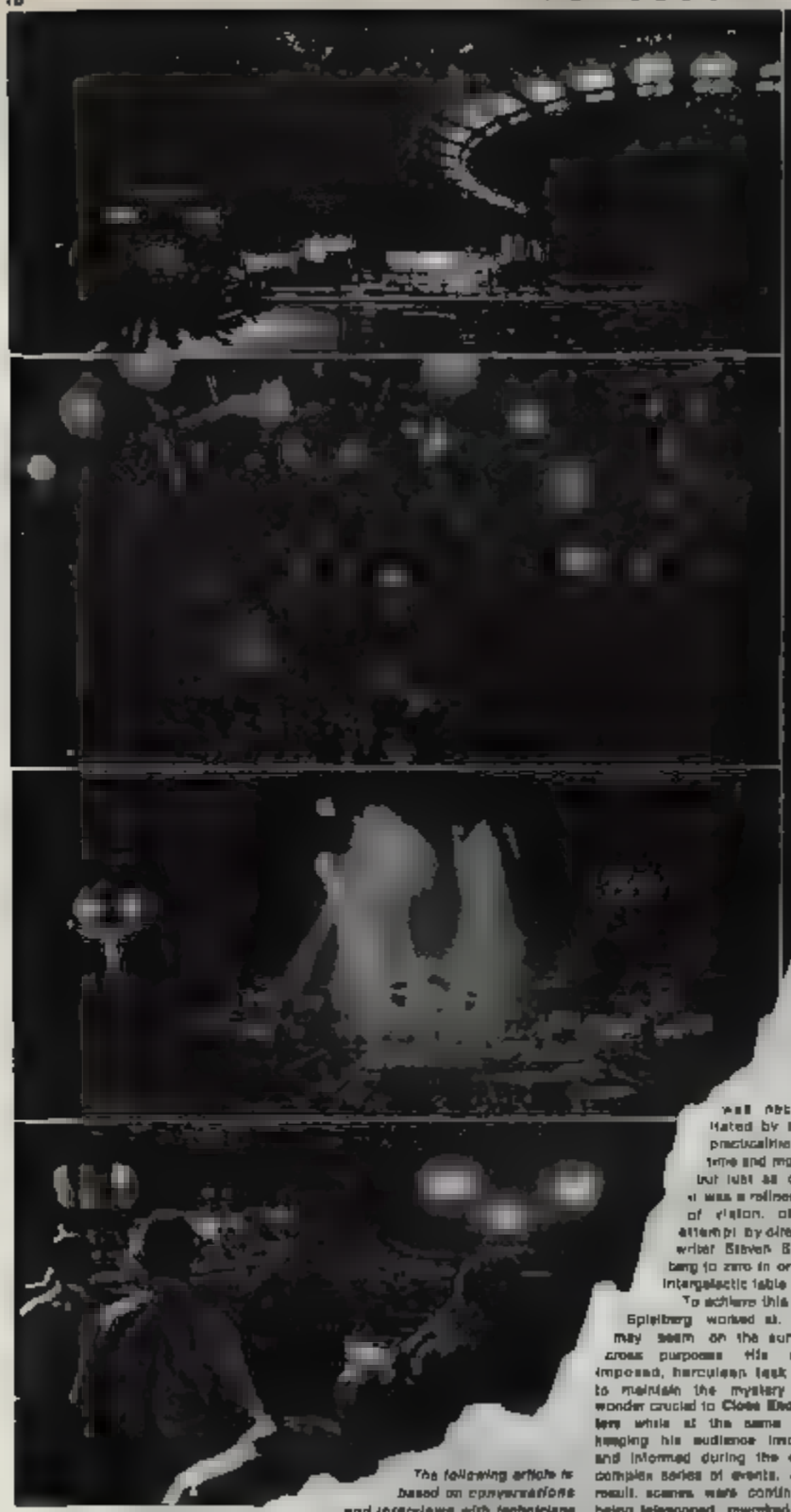


ENCOU :CLOSE TO

The following article is based on conversations and interviews with technicians who worked on Close Encounters of the Third Kind in various capacities.

The two-year plus gestation period of Close Encounters was one of almost organic growth and change. Often the changes were dictated by such practicalities as time and money but just as often it was a refinement of vision, of an attempt by director-writer Steven Spielberg to zero in on the intergalactic fable.

To achieve this end, Spielberg worked at what may seem on the surface, cross purposes. His self-imposed, herculean task was to maintain the mystery and wonder crucial to Close Encounters while at the same time keeping his audience involved and informed during the often complex series of events. As a result, scenes were continually being telescoped, reworked, cut and added even as the filming continued. The crew of the film went back no less than sixteen times for retakes and added footage after principal photography was, ostensibly, completed.

As originally conceived the film opened in the Indianapolis Air Traffic Control Center with the sighting of a UFO by an airline pilot rather than in the Sonora desert as it does now. The reason for the substitution seems clear. The Sonora scene – set at an Indian encampment – introduces us immediately to the private character of Lacombe (François Truffaut) and secondly is much more intense and evocative in mood.

In many ways the scene is a cross between the discovery of the saucer in Howard Hawks' The Thing (1951), with the scientists forming a circle around their find and shouting across the space to each other – underlined visually by the camera pans from one character to another – and Them (1954) with its desert sand storm and mad survivor. There was, interestingly enough, another scene in the original script of Close Encounters which paralleled the Sonora scene, a sequence in the Gobi desert where the scientists come upon a beached transAtlantic ocean liner, The Sulphur Queen, lost long ago in the Bermuda Triangle. It was another step, along with the sequences in Sonora, the U.S., and India, at universalizing the phenomena in order to increase the tension. The scene, however, was never shot.

There was also a good deal of telescoping and editing performed on the other sequences which open the film. For example: following the sighting at the Air Traffic Center (which is now the second sequence in the film), Lacombe and his translator arrive at the air facility to question the crew and passengers about the UFO they have just reported. In the original cut of the film it is, in fact, the final time we see Lacombe, preluded by a humorous interchange in which David Laughlin (the translator) proves his bilingual ability by translating, for Lacombe, a passage from a pornographic novel (Lacombe: "It has emotional value. Emotions are going to be important.")

The introductory scene in the Neary household is also much shorter, most of the cuts revolving around the Pinocchio motif. As the scene now stands, Roy Neary's (Richard Dreyfuss) nickname, "Jiminy Cricket," and the music box which plays a few bars of When You Wish Upon a Star are the only allusions to Pinocchio left. This was quite different however in the original version of film and script. The dialogue was far more extended, emphasizing among other things the Pinocchio imagery. Here is an excerpt:

NEARY (to his son) Forget the calculator. Okay Brad. Now this boxcar is sixty feet long. You stop your train. Okay. One-third of that boxcar is now across a switch and (dramatically) there's another train coming. How many feet do you move the train forward to clear the switch?

BRAD: I wouldn't move it.

NEARY Why not?

BRAD: I want to see it get smashed.

Ronnie sets the movie newspaper section in front of Neary who reluctantly explores it while she takes a compact mirror close to her mouth.

RONNIE Last weekend you promised everybody a movie this weekend.

BRAD You also promised Goofy Golf.

RONNIE (while she mouth is thinning out (looks up a yellowed photograph for Roy to see) Look at my Mom when she was my age. I already look two years older than her. Do I look two years older than her?

NEARY Hey. Guess what? Pinocchio's in town.

RONNIE Now, this is Mom at 35 without the glamour make-over.

NEARY The boys have never seen Pinocchio. Are you guys lucky.

BRAD: Who wants to see some dumb cartoon rated "G" for kids.

NEARY How old are you?

BRAD: Eight.

NEARY Wanna be nine?

BRAD: Yes.

NEARY We're seeing Pinocchio tomorrow.

RONNIE That's a fine way to win over your children.

NEARY I'm not serious. I'm just saying grow up with Pinocchio – kids are still kids they're going to sell it up.

Roy hums When You Wish Upon a Star. As he then trails off, Ronnie looks at Roy unconvinced.

NEARY You're right Fellas, you can make up your own minds and will not influence you in any way. Tomorrow you can play miniature golf which means a lot of walking, your arm and maybe scoring a zero. Or, you can see Pinocchio which has music and animals and magical stuff and things you will remember for real of your lives. Now let's vote.

BRAD, ROY, SYLVIA Golf!

RONNIE All right, to bed you guys.

This bit of dialogue, as well as the recording of "Jiminy Cricket" singing When You Wish Upon a Star as the mothership ascends in the final scene was eliminated in a move to underplay some of the more overt motifs.

While the above scenes were being cut and trimmed, others were being added to the purpose of clarity. The sequences in the Goldstone Tracking Center (Echo) where the alien signals (tones) are translated into the geographical coordinates of Devil's Tower and where the audience is finally clued into the nature of the military-scientific project were added as an afterthought. This includes all the exteriors of TRW and Lockheed trucks, destined for the base camp at Devil's Tower, being disguised as

NTERS THE INSIDE

Piggly-Wiggly and Baskin-Robbins transports and of the red-suited volunteers being loaded onto a bus, also headed for the camp.

But out-of-control production problems were, in the end, to decide many of the ways that Close Encounters would change before reaching the screen. The greatest problem was a major change in special effects plans which occurred on the set in Mobile, Alabama. Originally Spielberg and Doug Trumbull, the special effects designer, had planned to shoot many of the effects in the hanger-set itself by means of front projection. The base opera one camp and Crescendo Summit, the long and winding road over which the spaceships are first encountered, were constructed in the huge hanger there for the express purpose of using front projection to produce composite shots. Future General, the Los Angeles based company producing the effects under Trumbull's direction, sent shipment upon shipment of plates and front projection material—all for this purpose. But as time in the hanger was used up, Spielberg had to abandon that course entirely and find an alternative. Returning to the West Coast with half a film, Future General was put to work on the now even more problematical job of shooting from scratch.

With the original front projection strategy the effects could have been composited in the camera. However the only work which was completed in time to be combined on the Mobile set was the vastly intricate landscape miniatures which can be seen behind Crescendo Summit. Now Future General not only had to shoot the saucers, but also had to spend months dealing with matte paintings and, in the optical printer scenes made up of pieces and combined in ways they were never intended to be.

The bulk of the effects in Close Encounters are almost invisible shots with stars and painted skies added and landscape miniatures in closeup detail passing for live-action footage. All of the shots showing Neary and Gillian looking down at the base camp from the rocky slope are near-perfect matte shots combining two live action elements, the foreground actors and the base camp, with several paintings of rock slopes, sky and base camp lights. Dozens of shots like this were carried off with hardly any inserts and no registration wobbling—the telltale signs of imperfect movie effects.

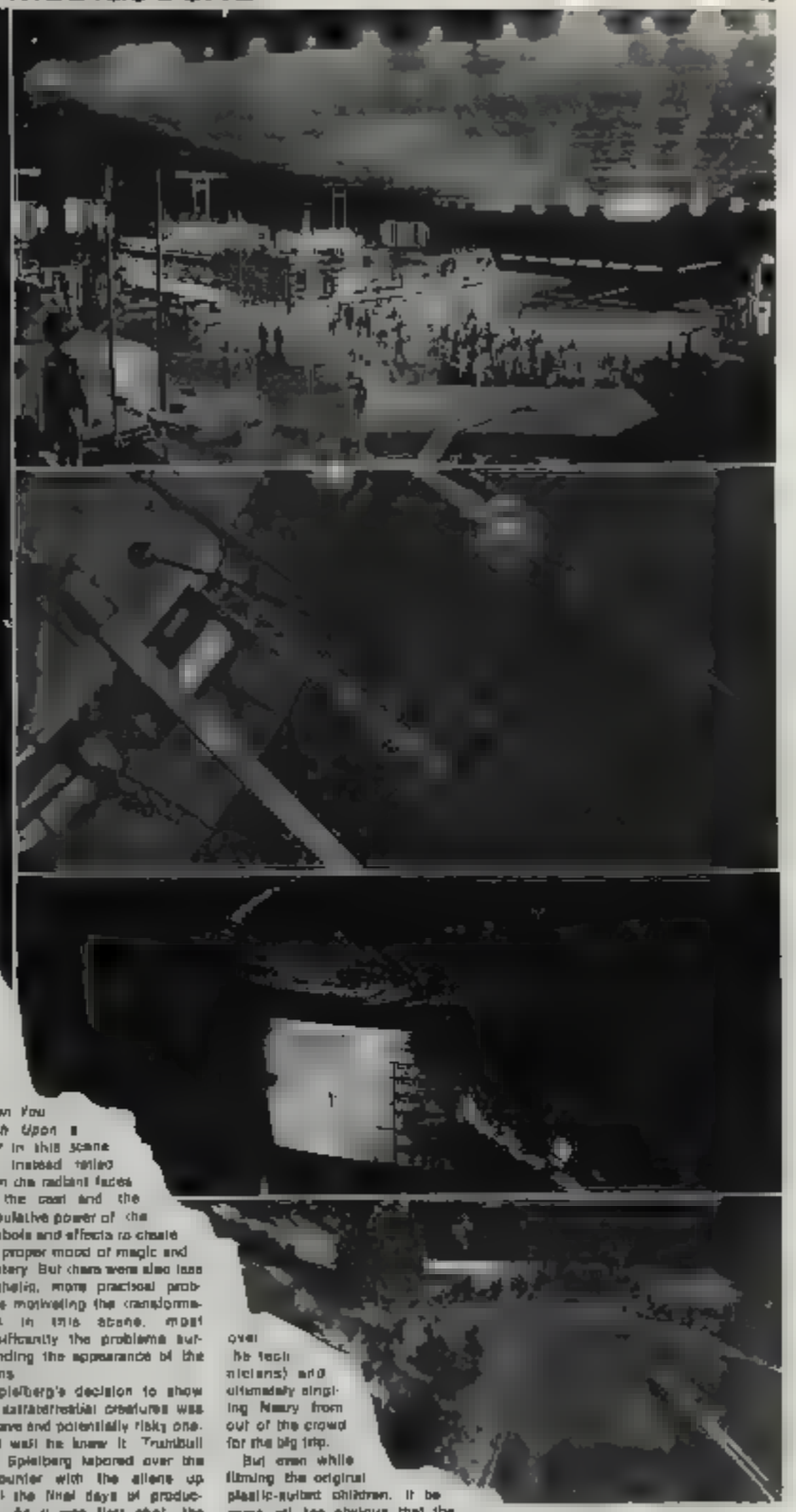
The master plan in approaching the effects scenes was simple and direct. The effects were divided into three basic areas: the Crescendo Summit scenes, the Guiler farmhouse and the final spectacle at the base camp.

As pointed out the Crescendo Summit had been constructed in the hangar and the landscape and city in the background added on the set via front projection. The stars in the sky and, of course, the saucers had to be filled in later during months of post-production work. The saucers for this scene, and the later ones at the base camp, went through many conceptual changes. The first to be constructed were designed to resemble giant MacDonald arches and Chevron insignias in keeping with an attempt by Spielberg to portray the aliens, despite so many other things, as friends to us in our own symbols.

But the more the designs were worked on and discussed, the more elaborate they became. The models finally settled upon were in the more traditional UFO sci-fi motif: oval, equipped with neon lights and attendant searchlights. They were shot in a smoke-filled room on a special effects rig called a "motion control." This device is essentially a remote controlled camera mounted on a track with eight or more motorized functions—tilting, panning, focus-pulling etc.—programmed into a sequencing computer. The saucers themselves moved only up and down and left and right on their own computer controlled mounts. The illusion of motion was created totally by tracking the camera in or away from the saucer. The results of all this were elusive shapes which while never distinctly clear in details advantage in models and in many ways much more naturalistic, impressed one with their speed, eerily diffused light and neon color.

The boiling cloud effect which appears at the Guiler farmhouse and heralds the arrival of the motherships at the base camp is one of the most advanced pieces of special effects in the film. The clouds were produced in a tank of water 8'x8'x8' in which an inversion layer of cold fresh water was separated from a layer of hot salty water by a plastic sheet. When the sheet was pulled away the technicians had approximately a half hour during which the two layers would not mix. Colored tempura paints were then shot squid-like into the tank with a siphon device at the end of a radiation-lab manipulator. Moving light wands were also inserted into the aqueous clouds to create strange lighting effects during which the amorphous, multi-colored mass moved across the countryside.

The climax of the film in terms of dramatic structure as well as visual effects is the final sequence at Devil's Tower. For this reason it was this sequence most pampered, most worked over, most refined, again to the purpose of clarifying while still maintaining a sense of mystery. It has been discussed earlier how Spielberg shied away from using



When You Wish Upon a Star in this scene and instead relied upon the radiant faces of the cast and the cumulative power of the symbols and effects to create the proper mood of magic and mystery. But there were also less aesthetic, more practical problems motivating the transformation in this scene, most significantly the problems surrounding the appearance of the aliens.

Spielberg's decision to show the extraterrestrial creatures was a brave and potentially risky one. And well he knew it. Trumbull and Spielberg labored over the encounter with the aliens up until the final days of production. As it was first shot, the creatures emerged from the ship and mingled among the earthlings, touching them, examining their possessions (including a bit where one of the aliens is offered a can of Coke which it promptly proceeds to spray all over the technicians) and ultimately singling Neary from out of the crowd for the big trip.

But even while filming the original plastic-suited children, it became all too obvious that the creatures were only that—children in fairly inventive costumes. The solution was to confine the aliens to the bright area around the ship and "blow it out" (overexpose it) with light. It was a stroke of genius which saved

the scene.

The next step as developed by Spielberg was to add more variety to the aliens. Consequently the monolith door of the spaceship was rejected and a long thin puppet-like creature designed by Bob Baker was used. This is the alien which emerges first from the ship, opening its arms in welcome.

As further evidence (if indeed it is needed) of how concerned Spielberg was over the appearance of the aliens, the creature which approaches Lacombe and returns his hand signals and smile is neither a child in a suit nor a puppet but a full size robot built by Carlo Rambaldi of recent King Kong fame. The design of the mothership also had its share of modifications. Originally it was to be huge black objects which moved through space blocking out stars and planets in its path erasing the heavens altogether a far more frightening spectacle than the one finally used.

But with the release of Star Wars in early 1977 and its subsequent success Spielberg threw away the original design for the ship and opted for a desired neon-lit city in the sky something which might rival the cruisers and Death Star in Star Wars. The mothership took three and a half months to build. It was five feet across with 5,000 volts powering tubes upon tubes of neon. There were sixteen different lights to correspond to the different levels of the model. New lands impinging were given the names of New York boroughs. As the model was being constructed Spielberg would come in periodically to examine the work. And after each visit he would ask for the same thing more detail until the model was literally crammed with objects ranging from an entire helicopter an antique hearse and other more whimsical paraphernalia which included a VW van a Jaws shark and a graveyard although the only visible joke addition was an R2D2 robot from Star Wars which can be seen passing by upside down in the very first mothership shot! When the model was completed to everyone's satisfaction it was the day's work before it was taken to its own smoke-filled room and photographed on a more limited motion control device. With the finishing of the mothership the film was at the end of its two-year journey. After many weeks of recombining and refinement in the optical printer the center of effects work the real shot gained directional approval and was cut into the work print. The days and nights of labor had borne fruit they called it Close Encounters of the Third Kind.

The film draws its power its uniqueness from a number of sources in reality and fantasy it plays upon the universal desire to believe in higher beings whether they are called gods or gods to be seen. A such outmoded concepts as revelation epiphany and magic. And in that its sense of wonder and innocence which is granted by both admirers and detractors of the film to be its chief asset it is galaxies away from the 1950's science fiction films it so fervently alludes to.

An excellent point of comparison is the 1953 film Invaders From Mars. Both movies have much in common in plot as well as theme. Invaders centers on a small boy's encounter with an alien invasion taking place right in his own backyard. The opening scene set as it is in an isolated farmhouse where the boy is awakened by the sounds and sights of a spaceship landing is very reminiscent of the child's story appearing in the Close Encounters book. The sound and sights of his toys magically in movement. There is the same half awake half asleep dreamlike quality to both sense of wonder.

The wonder in Invaders however is soon replaced by the emotions which suffuse most science fiction films of the period fear and paranoia. The boy inductively discovers that the aliens are actually evil intelligences who plan to dominate the earth by turning humans into obedient automatons. That feeling of fear is heightened even more by the subjectification involved in the set design and camera angles as David is manipulated to force the audience to share the boy's point of view as those around him are one by one implanted with the insidious crystal. Inevitably the boy finds refuge in the military and scientific community and by means of ray power and cunning destroys the aliens in a climactic confrontation. It is a scenario a combination repeated endlessly in 50's science fiction films. And it is exactly this kind of confrontation which Spielberg turns on its head in the final scene by replacing fear with awe and paranoia with wonder violence with joy and communication with revelation.

More than any science fiction film before it Close Encounters of the Third Kind directs unambiguously on the side of imagination and inspiration. Neary's alienation from his family and his suburban milieu as he is transformed from a simple-minded middle-class government employee into a passionate eccentric sculptor is indicative of this alignment as is the medium the aliens communicate in that of music. It is as if these unearthly visitors were actually muses who could inspire or more appropriately in the case of Neary who is locked into the bourgeois existence force out that creative passion which resides somewhere in each human psyche. Barry plays a tune over and over again on his xylophone his mother draws over and over again a mountain which Neary upends his meticulously yard to construct a mountain of mud in his living room and in the final scene humanity is given a new and beautiful musical language.

The script has conquered.

In the final analysis Close Encounters belongs much more to the magical animated world of Walt Disney than to the real hidden world of cinema science fiction. The many allusions to Disney films are within this context very apt the Tinkerbell like spaceship called the Gumdrop by the little boy which follows a few feet behind the larger ships the Pinocchio motifs and the final title shots as the boys camp watches Neary fly away aboard the mothership much like the children in Peter Pan watch their own return to his Never-Never land.

Spielberg reaches deep down into our collective childhood memory for these images and it may be these very images more than any of the other admittedly brilliant special effects which make it so outstanding celebration of wonder.

It takes two hours and fifteen minutes to let the child in each of us emerge for a few moments and celebrate the magic of all

● ...ed on page

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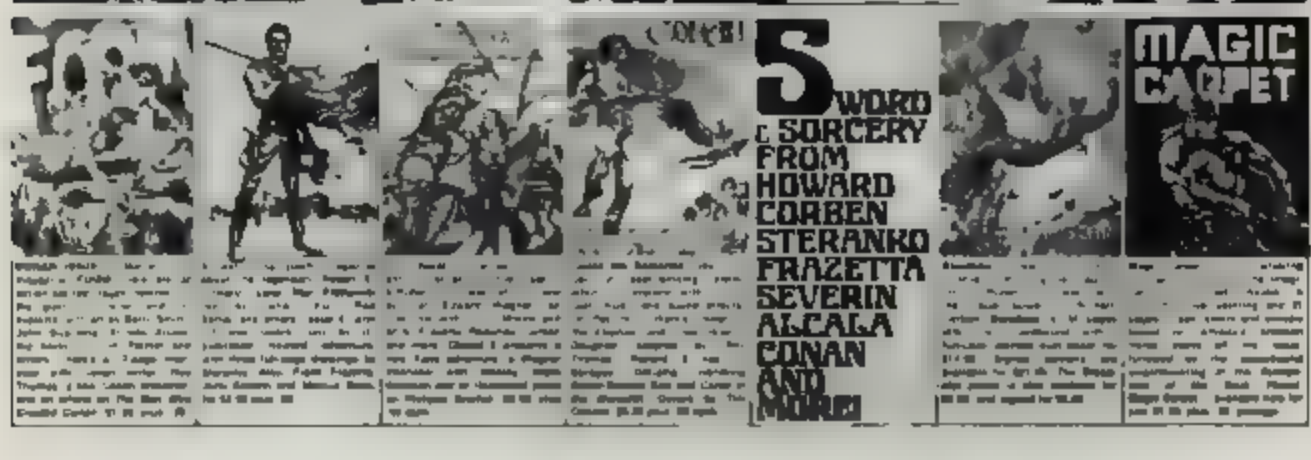

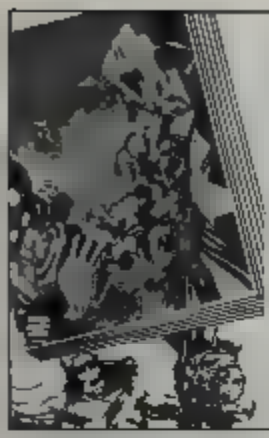

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BARRY SMITH

FATE SOWING THE STARS

Somewhere beyond reality, at a place where time and eternity intertwine, the gods hold council. The universe is hushed. The past and the present coalesce as Fate the Enchantress scatters the obsidian heavens with a symphony of stellar light. All her foes—all the forces of chaos and order—their destinies momentarily stilled by the luminous vision of the cosmic ocean.

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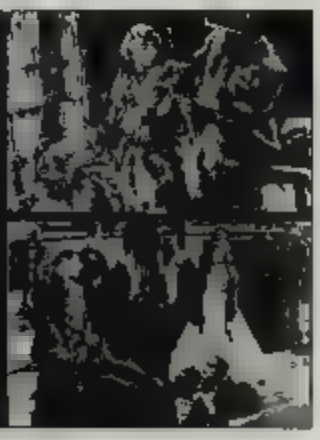
The Man From Beyond is a rare and exciting silent film classic, particularly memorable due to the energetic acrobatics of its star/writer/producer and master magician, Harry Houdini. Now, an *exact facsimile edition* of **The Man From Beyond Pressbook** is available in a *limited printing of 700 copies*, exclusively from SUPERGRAPHICS. This pressbook is a sorcerer's delight of rare biographies, photos and vintage data printed on high-quality slick paper, 11x18 inches in size. **The Man From Beyond Pressbook** is packed with *information that has never appeared anywhere else*, and chronicles an aspect of Houdini's career that is virtually unknown to even the most dedicated illusionists. This is definitely a *specialized* collector's item, and will disappear fast-right before your very eyes! $10.00 plus .75 postage—all copies are mailed flat.



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possibilities

Bob Gould and Eric Kimball have appeared out of nowhere to make a bid for the independents artist-publishers crown. Don't bother trying to dig up their past credits, there aren't any. At 25 and 26, this artist-writer team has made their presence known with style and impact.

With their first print and story treatments of Elric of Melniboné (Elric the White Wolf and The Prisoner of Pan Tang: Star-Reach 26), Two Man Horse immediately surfaced as a new name to watch in the space of one year, producing extremely limited signed and numbered editions of their work they have gone on to win the recognition of dealers of rare and fine-press prints and books, with prices rapidly doubling in price. The color version of their print Sword of Roses (an edition of twenty copies) has spiralled steadily upward from its original one hundred dollar price to a tag of three hundred and fifty. And, with word of its publication, their Elric of Melniboné portfolio sold out of its thousand copies months before it was even scheduled to come off the press.

An impressive track record for two unknowns. Yet the question still persists: Who are they? And where did they come from? The following should help lay some of those questions to rest.

Being a hard-bitten romantic treasurer of curious scraps of lore, should like nothing better than to tell you that the name "Two Man Horse" was first uttered by a dying angel on a beach in Zanzibar. This is at least as believable an origin story as many I have heard, and one markedly less boring than most. Offer it here in utter confidence that it will finally spell an end to the one, single question most plaguingly asked of both myself and Bob Gould: ah angel gave us the name. It is as simple as that.

And luckily, he spoke just in time.

For three years ago, it was with nothing but that name—and two perfectly identical paper rectangles declaring that we knew something about art—that Gould and I left college in Boston to make our ways in this wicked world. Those ways proved to be immediately different, leading us off into two different states, but somehow, most strangely, the name never quite managed to die. In hard point of fact it quickly began to reveal every last intention of leading a long and industrious life, appearing with an almost insidious regularity at comic art conventions up and down the East Coast.

I cannot tell you when the two of us initially decided to work together, but I can say that it was extremely early on when we discovered that something within the combination was right.

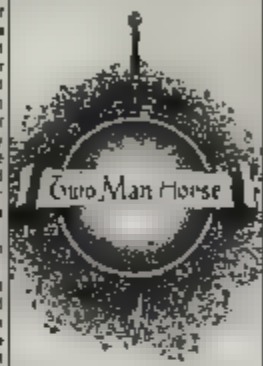
In those first, early days (" now come listen to your old grandfather son. "), working entirely through the mails (" had to walk five miles to school we began to write, draw, polish and edit it' shovelled coal ten hours a day. ") a series of one-page strips entitled Ravens. One by one, we sent them trundling off to shows—and one by one they came trundling back to us, each bearing a new award.

* * *

The line of six asterisks preceding this sentence is a fairly standard literary device most often employed by hurried writers to indicate the passage of time in this case, it is striving to indicate one year. And, while you could never have guessed it (study those asterisks all you might), the year signified 1975—was of critical importance in the developing saga of Two Man Horse.

But let me attempt to make things easier.

Before moving on to relate that year's calendar of events, I think it would prove immensely helpful if you tried to envision each asterisk as two months. Thus equipped with this convenient visual aid, we—being careful to read from left to right—find that 1975 unfolded in a manner very much like this. During the first asterisk, Gould and I once again found ourself living in Boston. Bob as I remember had already boldly begun illustrating some unnamed aspect of Michael Moorcock's celebrated sword-and-philosophy character Elric. To this end, he had assembled a small stack of loosely-penciled story pages, as well as some half-dozen trial sketches for a proposed Elric print.



By the second asterisk, a publisher had been located for the now-completed print, and by the third asterisk, **Elric: the White Wolf** had found a welcome place among the adornments of some of this continent's most noted walls.

On a night during the fourth asterisk was jolted from a much-needed sleep by a frantically-repeated pounding at my door. Tossing back the latch, I was swift to discover Gould huddled on the step, quite nearly buried beneath an immense load of art. Thrusting this stack at me he squeaked (he I scrutinize it at length in the off chance that it might suggest some story. This it eventually did, and—somewhere between asterisks four and five—I penned the opening paragraph of **The Prisoner of Pan Tang**.

We arrive at last at the final asterisk. Reader, bid thee gaze well upon that hemibreadth of printer's ink, that double-dimensioned symbol of time—for the event it marks was one that crystallized each of the aforementioned five into a definite, lasting pattern. It marks what we dine mat Barry Smith.

Picture a row of dominoes standing in such a way that when toppled, they will together spell out a name. Picture a finger clicking the first domino against the next. Picture the name coming up "Two Man Horse."

But let us pause here for a moment—here on the brink of 1976—while I prepare to scatter a few more asterisks. These are of a very different sort than the last, and have absolutely nothing to do with the passing of time. These rather represent a pausing in narrative tone from biographic to reflective.

* * *

It is the greatest nonsense to think that there could ever have been a Two Man Horse had there not first been Barry Smith's Gorblimey Press in making the decision to take every aspect of his work into his own hands—from its initial concept to its eventual publication, distribution and sale—Smith proved that, yes, it really could be done: an artist could create in total freedom—and without committing financial suicide in the act. When Smith turned his back on a marketplace more interested in merchandising rubbish than ideas he created a new marketplace—of possibilities. And one of those possibilities was us.

Two Man Horse was officially born in the Spring of 1976 with the release of **Sword of Roses**, the first print to emerge from our infant press. Our goal at its inception was of the utmost clarity and—while since pushing many a twisted path—I should like to believe that each of us has continually done his level best to keep that goal constant before him. It was—and still hopefully is—this: that the name Two Man Horse reflect the efforts of two individual artists to together create a thing greater than either could have possibly created alone.

At this writing, our latest major release has been the **Elric of Melniboné** portfolio, and do urge the more interested of you to obtain a copy while there are yet some to be obtained. It has already very nearly disappeared from all but the resale markets, and, as scarcity traditionally demand, so does also determine price.

Come the Spring of the new year we anticipate the early release of the first two of a proposed series of fables for our time. In keeping with my customary reticence to discuss unpublished work, can tell you only that these will constitute a blending of story and art in a manner most probably unlike any that you have yet seen. Their titles are **Of Air and Fire** and **Mirrors in the Dust**, and I do believe that you will find them quite entirely worth your while.

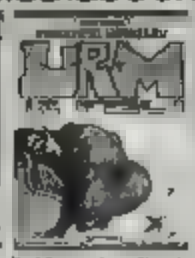
And, as every press that is at all worthy of the name must possess one seemingly unpublishable 'monster' that appears to do nothing but lumber on and on as weeks flow into months and months into years—so too are we blessed. Ours is **The Passing of Arthur** and here, in hand print cast all reason to the winds by firmly predicting its absolute Summer release.

Further than this I care not to project. While have tried to tell you a bit about Two Man Horse's past, cannot with any certainty foresee its future. It is a question to be answered by time.

\+ \+

am certain of one thing only and that is where I first heard the name: a dying angel whispered it to me a moment before he burst into light.●

Eric Kimball

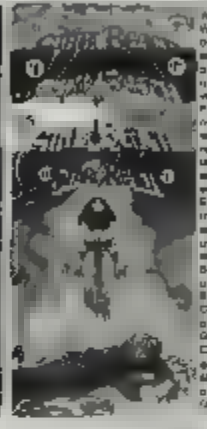


FIVE FANTASTIC VOYAGES!

Perhaps Unicef is more than a little pitiful (or does a insect-weevil relish also an unalterably violent post-Apocalypse pig-captivity) to the stories, passions deeps mind screams color-rages and legions of drooling beings dark middle galaxies here are five sub-color Unicef boxes just imported from France and packed with astounding sci-fi/adventure

The 5 Voyages of Lone Sloane is an breathtaking fantasy through a tortured mechanistic universe. Deathus is a chronicle of grimly serious and dramatic fiction and Simonetti Tragedi is a tale of swords and sorcery on a gigantic planet each which combines with its unique time Bio Plast to create an awesome fighting epic of cruelest vengeance and destruction. The Night [illegible] Each [illegible] spaceborne epic is [illegible] Depth Heart Hope By [illegible] volumes are panoramic and printed in French with some [illegible] In particular pages in B.M. plus 50 postage each Easily the most stellarly graphic science-fantasy series ever published!

Roger Dean's Trees are leaving record jackets and wandering ... in Schoolkids Outbreak Kitbil you know it's [illegible] and accomplished reality-illumination dedicated, combining ... dramatic color-filled wonder-practicum detail. Technique ... of nightmarish extravagance, color and a Headpiece Hydrant ... shocking ideas. Hyper-vapor imagination. Hyper is a piece of ... beautiful peacefully and splendid, elegant, magic dreams. ... lovingly produced and lushly illustrated and delivery. All this ... packaged in a limited eight-page portfolio for ... a ... printed on quality gloss mounting accompanying ... Hyper Roger Dean's ... [illegible]



ADAMS BRADBURY BRUNNER CHAYKIN RUSSELL SMITH STARLIN

Who are greatest-dead comics? Well they're not underground. Oh! maybe not underground either in a way, they're the best of both STAR-REACH #1 a million-grammage publishing venture by comics writer Mike Friedrich using the best of the underground artists on a format without censorship or the restrictions of the Comics Code. ... features the first totally portrait-like portrait by ... assurance of Cody Weisbrock Jeff Jones Ray Bradbury ... with art by Gilbert Chaykin Nasi and Jim Starlin's Birds of Sinistrade, others. ... Bijoux Gingbird ... introduces Sapphosis Rose with cover ... cartoons on ... art by Adams Starlin Wrightson, stories by Joe Staton ... others ... Heed & Impressions ... Brunner ... and more Lovecraft all drawn by Mike Ploscoe with a spectacular Brunner ... cover ... Lakeisha ... unpublished ... others ... Bijoux Gingbird ... Bismarck's nerves and an ... by Panosian ... Chaykin ... Lakeisha ... others ... Heed & Impressions ... Queen Face ... Isotope ... Chaykin Station. Brunner, ... also ... Bijoux Gingbird ... characters Eric is The Prisoner continues the ... of Blount of Pantony adapted by Bob Chaykin ... Nasi and Eric ... Dana Day and ... but you'll be glad ...

Ken Steacy ... Elric ... Queen ... Moorcock ... Day ... Michael Gilbert ... Adams ... A spectacular ... collection ... 10 sparkle ... fantastic ... cover by Angus ... followed ... 10-page ... of Parsifal by ... Russell ... Wizardry ... 6-page ... overall tale ... more ... Conan ... Sword ... Jim Pinkava ... Adam Wyatt ... cover by Kaz ... A new ... series by Gary ... story ... a host ... Dana Day ... Issue 12 ... Dean Motter ... Jaxon ... Space ... Starlin ... 32 pages ... Available ... for $1.25 ... February. ... [illegible]

In the American ... pushing ... Heavy ... comic ... stunning ... of ... full-color ... by Richard ... Bernie Wrightson and ... Jacks ... are ... of ... publications by Pierre ... in Drake and Kelly ... what the ... of Heavy Metal ... mature ... and ... for ... [illegible]

Space Shuttle ... many days ... reports ... the fantastic ... was started by Gene ... Mike Kaluta ... and being marketed ... the United States ... fantastic ... appearance ... of ... proven ... [illegible] ... and ... scenes and ...

SPACE:1999

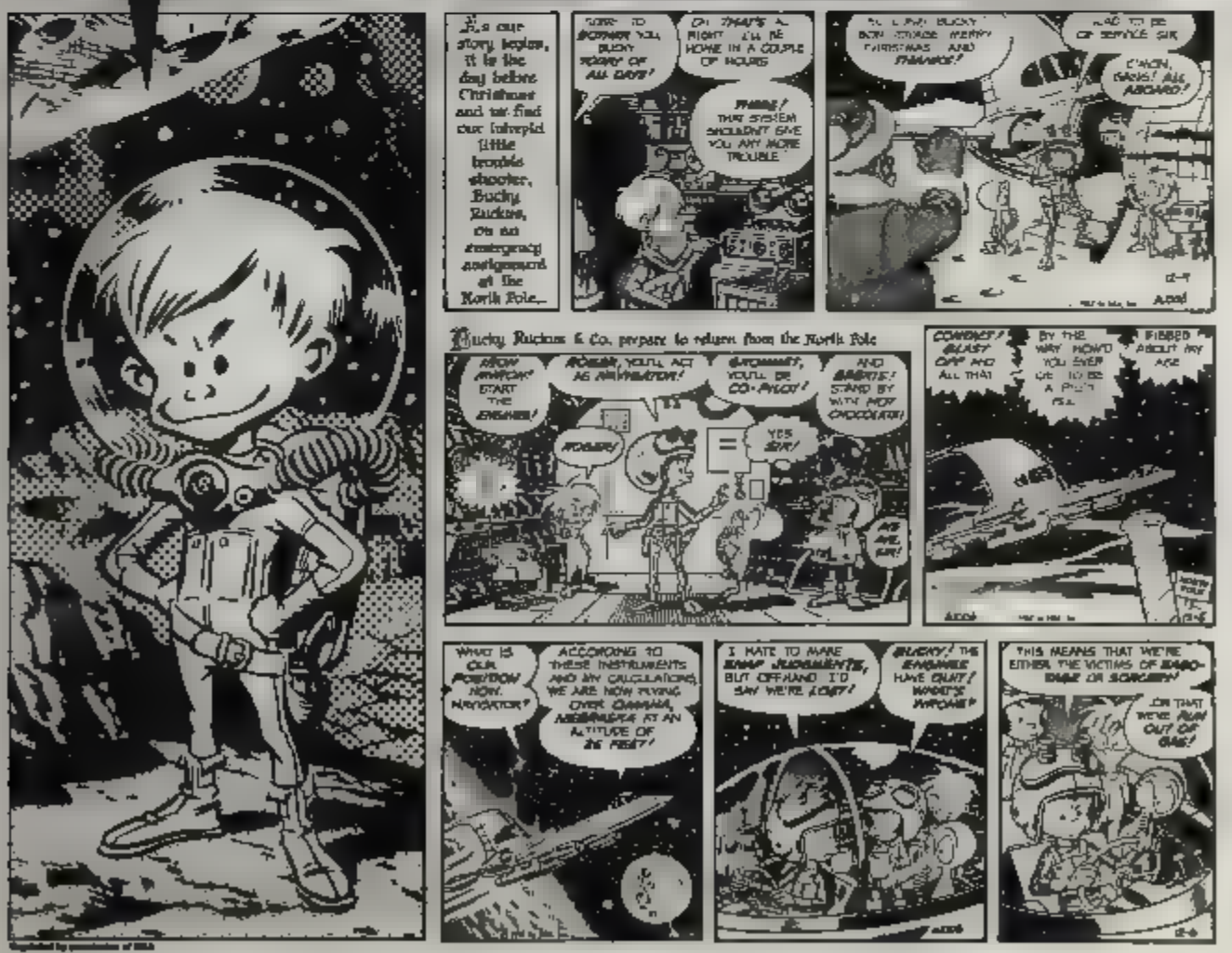
... special effects ... movie, this Space 1999 ... might be seen ... the ... Aside the ... and ... comics ... to present ... the ... adventures of ... Moonbase ... a ... of ... color ... Pulled ... and ... Perfect ... and ... many ... issues ... through ... and the ... weighs almost ... pounds. The ... reproduction ... is impressive ... Printed ... quality ... and ... is a ... collector's ... and ... the ... was ... for ... Every ... copy ... mailed ... in ... sturdy ... cardboard ... to ... [illegible]

The ... range ... Esperanto ... is ... available ... and ... guaranteed ... to ... in ... range ... machines ... and ... range ... spaces ... [illegible] ... of ... of ... Over ... publications ... a ... [illegible] ... a ... [illegible] ... and ... cover. ... limited ... [illegible] ... to ... [illegible]

... [illegible] ... you ... the ... to ... and ... [illegible] ... this ... page ... with ... and ... pro-professional ... artists ... You ... be ... to ... [illegible] ... Monsters. ... There ... also ... advertisement ... inviting ... HOW TO DRAW MONSTERS ... written ... professional ... Many ... for $1.00 plus .15

... by ... [illegible] ... PLANET OF THE APES ... as ... POSTER MAGAZINE ... [illegible] ... and ... [illegible] ... pictures ... [illegible] ... addition ... [illegible] ... Apes ... [illegible] ... [illegible] ... [illegible]

WALLY WOOD'S Bucky AND THE CHRISTMAS CAPER


It's our story begins, it is the day before Christmas and we find our intrepid little brigade shooter, Bucky Rickus, on an emergency assignment at the North Pole...
Bucky Rickus & Co. prepare to return from the North Pole
NOW, AWSOM! START THE ENGINES!
ROGER, YOU'LL ACT AS NAVIGATOR!
SERGEANT, YOU'LL BE CO-PILOT!
AND BARNES! STAND BY WITH HOT CHOCOLATE!
ROGER!
YES SIR!
AYE AYE, SIR!
COWBOY! BLAST OFF AND ALL THAT
BY THE WAY, HOW'D YOU EVER GET TO BE A PILOT?
I FIBBED ABOUT MY AGE
WHAT IS OUR POSITION NOW, NAVIGATOR?
ACCORDING TO THESE INSTRUMENTS AND MY CALCULATIONS, WE ARE NOW FLYING OVER OMAHA, NEBRASKA AT AN ALTITUDE OF 25 FEET!
I HATE TO MAKE SNAP JUDGMENTS, BUT OFFHAND I'D SAY WE'RE LOST!
BUCKY! THE ENGINES HAVE QUIT! WHERE'S AWSOME?
THIS MEANS THAT WE'RE EITHER THE VICTIMS OF BLACK MAGIC OR SORCERY!
OR THAT WE'RE RUN OUT OF GAS!

Mediascene

DISCOUNT POSTER SERVICE

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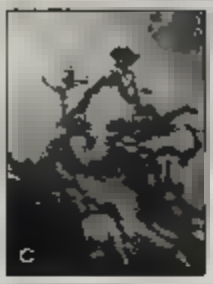
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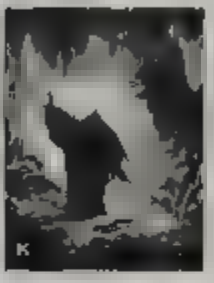
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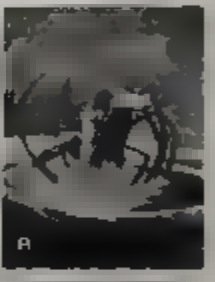
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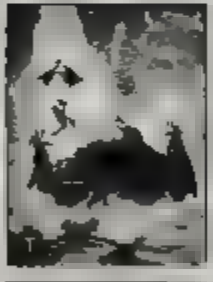
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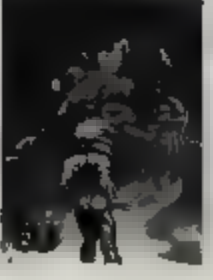
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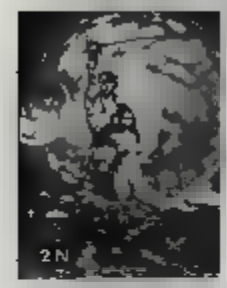
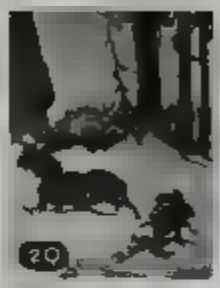
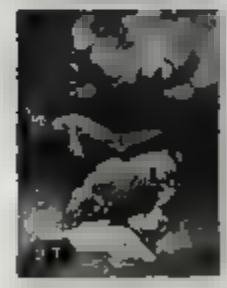
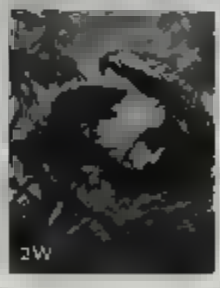
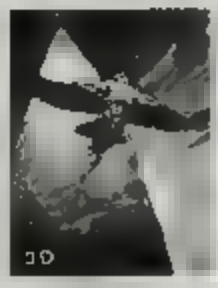
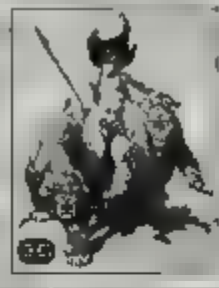


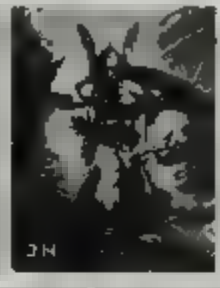










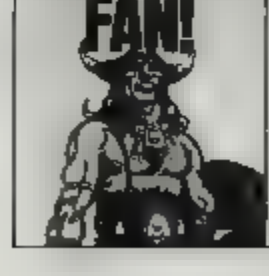


CONAN, BRAK, JOHN CARTER, TARZAN. All these heroes and more are available now on gigantic full-color posters at bargain prices. These posters capture the essence of heroic fantasy and sword & sorcery and usually cost $3.00 each. Now through SUPERGRAPHICS, YOU can get them all at *discount prices*. Order NOW!

Due to an unforseen price hike from our supplier we must change the prices on all of our Frazetta posters, and begin phasing out certain slower sellers. As of January 1, 1978 all Frazetta posters will sell for $3.75 each! Some of these posters are in short supply and will not be restocked, so order your copies while they are still available. Most dealers will be charging $4.00 for these posters, so we are still the best discount poster service available.

Postage rates: 1-3 posters .50 postage
4-9 posters $1.00 postage
10 or more $2.00 postage
Please add .50 for insurance

FOUR MORE FOR THE FRAZETTA FAN!



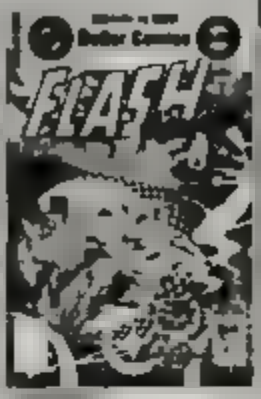
This is the first and latest of the Frazetta folios, out of print for years! We've secured a limited quantity of this publication and are making it available on a **first-come, first-served basis.** Tarzan, David Innes and a host of Edgar Rice Burroughs' heroes, villains and beasts are interpreted masterfully by the magic Frazetta pen. $2.00 plus .50 postage.

A companion volume, similar in size and format features a collection of Frazetta's most difficult to find work—his CONAN sketches, John Carter of Mars illustrations, men's magazine art and obscure record album covers. **After these are gone, there will be no more!** Order your copy today. $2.00 plus .50 postage.

For the specialist. Here's a portfolio devoted exclusively to the Frazetta woman, an unforgettable collection of females with curves in places where most girls DON'T EVEN HAVE PLACES! Full and double page-sized pin-ups make this one of the most unique Frazetta offerings yet—and are available only in this publication. $2.00 plus .50 postage.

It's the newest and best collection of art yet from the master of fantasy, Frank Frazetta. An invaluable addition to any collection. **The Rare Frazetta** collects dozens of movie posters, record jackets, book covers and out-of-print portfolios under one full-color cover. Available for a limited time only, at $5.00 plus .50. **The Rare Frazetta** deserves a place on your shelves.

COMIXSCENE



After [illegible] a hiking bill of pages and higher prices and lower page counts DC has taken the plunge to effect a change in the accepted comic book format. Paper printing and editorial costs have risen to the point where the 32 page comic book would have to become more than one half advertising or suffer another price hike. DC has decided to compromise both solutions by boosting their page count per issue to 48 with an 8 of the added pages going to the stories and not ads. There will be a higher price tag for all this however and DC will become the first company to charge 50 cents for their added comics line with the stories remaining as a secondary [illegible]. A [illegible] the price has been going on since the initial 10 cents ground when the [illegible] to convince Wagner in December. A good sales period over the summer reinforced the arguments that comics were a viable product and the recession has some positive change has been evident for at least two years. The start of format changes began in June '78 when many determining elements such a size and price are acceptable in the marketplace are [illegible] to be experimented with.

Many Marvel editors and writers seem to be somewhat baffled by this change in size and price and feel that the [illegible] Perhaps on the [illegible] have a

DC spokesperson Jeanette Kahn is quoted as saying that DC is not looking for the kind of readership in it. The publishers will benefit the Special Olympics and a great deal of effort is being expended to get national coverage and attendance by President Carter.

Prior to most this deadline Executive Richard Donner was ordered to cease down production on the second Superman film before it was too much finished. As soon as the necessary filming, editing and dubbing be over the fate of Superman will be published off in New York and London with the combined budgets of the two countries at $40 million. Feature stories are already being prepared by a few major newspapers and magazines and the film producers would like to have both projects completed before the months of media hoopla begins the production of another major hyper.

In the comics Batman #30 is coming up featuring the Joe Kubert Story " by David V. Reed and Dick Giordano. There is even a remote possibility that Giordano's heavy inking commitments have Adams may pencil the story which is a double sized 34 page wonder and of the far future with Robin the father of teens.

Shortly [illegible] will be back with the new part Adam Strange feature. Mayer team up similar to Jack C. Hay's partnership in A Kingdom

[illegible] Batman [illegible] the [illegible] Hawkman [illegible] Hawkman [illegible] Hawkman

news/views/reviews from the world of comics

will include a regular Phantom Stranger series to be placed in **House of Mystery** with art by Jim Aparo. The team will also be collaborating on a Deadman series for the new dollar-size **Adventure Comics**.

For **Batman Family** there is a strong possibility that Len will revive Jack Kirby's Demon as a filler feature, teaming with either Walt Simonson or Jim Starlin. Len's other Kirby-created series **Mister Miracle**, will reintroduce Shilo Norman to the cast of characters beginning with the issue penciled by Mike Golden and inked by Russ Heath.

Wally Wood has returned to comics as the artist of the **Flash** special and is slated to start on another title to be penciled by

Larry Hama. Wood is also scheduled to take over the inking of the Wonder Woman series in **World's Finest** as soon as he recovers from a temporary illness and gets married.

DC's 1978 line-up of specials is being planned all revolving around the dollar format with 64 pages of new material. Jonah Hex will appear with a 30-page lead written by Michael Fleisher, a 17-page Scalphunter saga, and a new 13-page Bat Lash story. Fleisher by the way has OK'd David Michelinie to write the regular Jonah Hex book for issues 10 to 5, while he puts the finishing touches on his Superman volume of **The Encyclopedia of Comic Heroes**, due for release in June.

Sgt. Rock will also have a special next year written by Kanigher and drawn by Joe Kubert. Noteworthy in this book will be a number of pages tailored from the aborted **Prezaar** companion to the ill-fated **Bulletboy**, which prophetically lived up to its name. The Rock story will be 64-pages long with the battle action being seen from both sides of the battlefield.

The **Batman** special will be a little more unusual featuring two 25-page tales, one each by Len Wein and Dave Reed, along with a 5000-word prose story by Denny O'Neil. The O'Neil section will be illustrated, but no artist has been settled on yet.

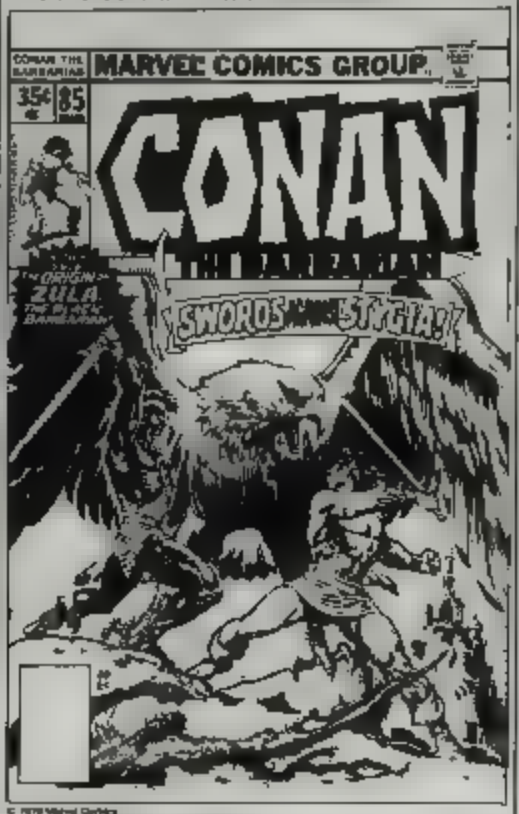
Frank Chiaramonte will take over as the regular inker on Superman, allowing Dan Adkins to become the permanent inker on **DC Presents**, with Jose Luis Garcia-Lopez penciling. Adkins and Lopez will be the team on this Superman team-up series from its first issue, which will bring in Adam Strange as the guest of the month.

Finally the Justice League format newspaper strip has been given a firm starting date, April 1 (no jokes please), and Marty Pasko has enlarged his role from plotting the series to providing the complete script.

At Marvel, the latest news concerns the success of the TV series suit. There are at least three one-hour and one two-hour Spider-Man shows going into production, and **The Hulk** has been signed as a regular mid-season replacement series. Apparently the reaction to comics on TV was favorable, and large scale testing will be done with more Marvel heroes and heroines.

Dr. Strange has begun production for Universal, and Strange artist Frank Brunner has been called upon to help design some of the scenarios and magical effects. There is a **Ms. Marvel** project underway which has reached story treatment form, and will progress as the current TV season winds down and fall-ins are needed.

Though the year has just begun Marvel is already hard at work on a 1979 calendar this



time featuring the Hulk. Assignments are coming in already with Kirby's being a massive rendition of the Hulk's face grinning out at the viewer for a whole month.

Marvel's adaptation of **Close Encounters of the Third Kind** has completed the penciling stage, and is now in the hands of inker Al Milgrom. Penciller Walt Simonson saved the spectacular appearance of the alien mothership until last because he was forced to pencil the rest of the book without a single scrap of photographic reference from the film. Finally having seen the complete movie, Simonson felt he could go ahead and create this crucial scene in a panoramic double-page full of detail, filling the sci-fi trend for all it's worth. Doug Moench and Tom Sutton have joined forces to create **Seeker 3000** which is a Star Trek/Star Wars/Space: 1999 conglomerate set for a debut in **Marvel Premiere** and possible series status. Seeker 3000 is actually the name of a giant space ark which must leave the Earth before the sun goes nova. Lost in space and journeying into mystery, the craft can only shift into warp drive with the aid of a female telepath, and the crew is made up of the usual archtypes.

Another probable series for Moench is the revived **Weird World** which will appear in a backup role for Thor or as a full-fledged book of its own. There is even a possibility of getting Mike Ploog back to draw the series, providing the scheduling keeps the series bi-monthly or calls for fewer pages.

Godzilla has turned out to be one of Marvel's better selling magazines, prompting the creation of a companion Japanese robot title and a few spin-off

godzilla paves way for invasion

ideas. Marvel is negotiating to acquire both comic and toy manufacturing rights to some half-dozen Japanese monster characters. They can have the comic rights to **Shogun**, a relatively popular series, but Marvel is already making a mint out the merchandising of that name already. Marvel hopes to acquire another Japanese robot character and create a similar merchandising deal on their own, which will undoubtedly be made to order for gadgets and take-apart accessories.

Marvel is also investigating whether or not they have the rights to create non-contemporary Godzilla stories for the **What If?** comic. Two ideas just existing in Doug's typewriter are **What If**

COMIXSCENE

Godzilla has a substance in Alpha War 2 and joined the Invaders. And what if Godzilla was a substance for the day of the dinosaurs?

Yet another What If? idea by Marvel revolves around the idea that Shang Chi had never left the service of Fu Manchu. In spin questions of the

Depending on what day it is the Rampaging Hulk back and white magazine may or may not be grounded. Six month old solar figures have seemingly doomed the title but the TV series will bounce mar and have a pilot [illegible] future saves

finished Alice in Wonderland and the Flight unfinished artists are illustrating the tale the classic style of the original book's Tenniel illustrations.

Now he is G. Kane has dropped the John Carter [illegible] the series is looking for a new artist and marking the will

an be found he may leave the [illegible] or leave ?

[illegible] Roy is considering [illegible] ng the Beast series due to the amazing real actions placed the book. It seems that Roy is [illegible] to adapt novels and [illegible] stories as long as he does [illegible] the originals [illegible] or will

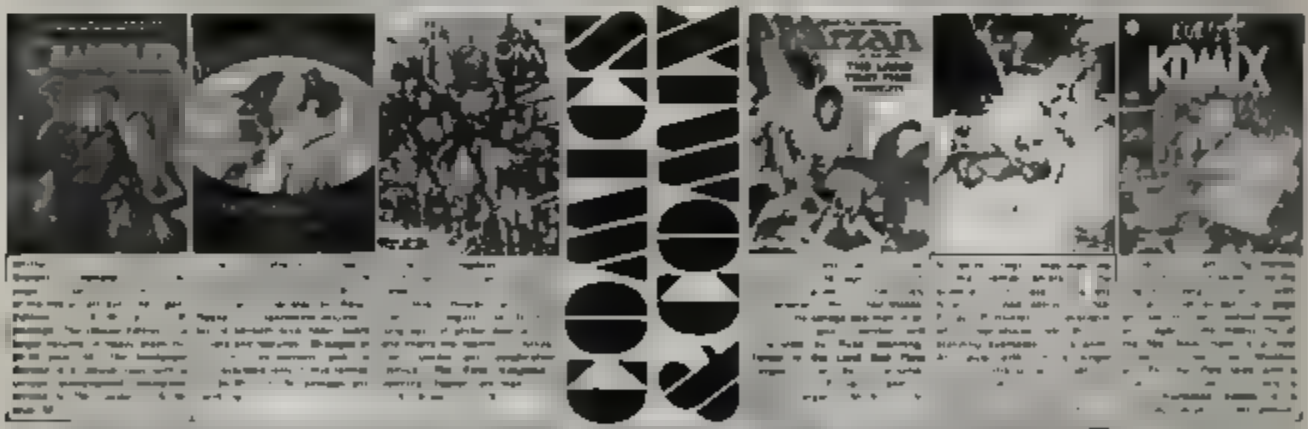
appear soon illustrated by Rick Hoberg.

In the regular Kung Fu comic Doug is starting out the China Seas storyline to be followed by a one-issue hit in by Mike Zeck. Then it's back to New York or London for Chi once again in search of the secrets of the universe and the answers the Mandarins Doug is confused about the whole matter and would like to find out if the mutt will ever stomp his back and white green feet again.

In the help of adaptions Moench is about to begin on the movie Kingdom of the Spiders, [illegible] with Herb Trimpe. For the [illegible] a series he has just [illegible] by a variety of people Fleming, Starlino and A [illegible] Wenzel are both working [illegible] pen stories with Mike Hoffman and there are single issue tales coming up by Rudy Nebres, Alfredo Alcala and Ernie Chan. Wortman is somewhat disappointed at losing [illegible] and feels that no proper substitute

[illegible] the Burroughs copy for [illegible] or captions. His easy availability in California [illegible] possible for the [illegible] roughs people to order [illegible] and alterations. Rad [illegible] differences cost a fortune [illegible] prune pits.

[illegible] the publishing rights [illegible] both Roy and Marv to



news/views/reviews from the world of comics

their Burroughs' series is the possibility of doing a two-part *Tarzan on Mars* story in 1978's **Tarzan** and **John Carter** annuals. This has been a pet project between the two authors, but it remains to be seen if the ERB estate will allow the unorthodox interbreeding of legends.

© 1978 Marvel Comics

Another reason for Roy's ambivalence towards **Tarzan** is his desire to put more time and effort (and freedom) into **Thor**, which will become Marvel's experiment in the dollar-size format. Besides the main Thor feature and a Tales of Asgard, the book will also house a few other series, with Hercules, The Eternals and Warriors Three being recommended.

Wolfman is beginning to plant his plots, subplots and sub-subplots into **Spider-Man** as he takes the book over from departing Len Wein. One of the first moves is to build up the

character of Len's *Rocket Racer* into a major hero. Marv is planning similar moves for the **Fantastic Four**, but is primarily just waiting to get to that book's 300th issue before making any drastic changes. There is a possibility that FF 300 will be a double-sized special, and Kirby is being approached to return to

the series.

Dracula is about to initiate the vampire invasion of the United States, and embark on another long serial-form adventure. Wolfman's Dracula, by the way, was an influence on the current off-Broadway play **Passion of Dracula**. This is because the play is written/co-produced and art designed by Bob Hall, who was a student of John Buscema's comic art school and worked on various Marvel comics, such as **Sagar-Villain Team-Up**. When working on the script, Hall would consult the comics to gain insight into the legend.

Tim Conrad has wrapped up the first four issues of *Warrior of the Lost Planet*, based on Robert E. Howard's **Almuric**, and set to appear in **Marvel Premiere** as soon as the entire job is finished and the space opera up. Written by Ray, the strip is a showcase of interplanetary sword & sorcery in the Conan

vein.

For those interested, the *Comic Art Fan Awards* ballots are available from Frank Gargulio 131 Coty St./New Haven, CT/ 06513. The *CAFA* are the oldest and most representative awards given to comic artists and writers, and the only way to vote is to send for a ballot.●

Sis's aunt Wally Wood's wondrous Princess of Pain does her unconscious best against the forces of evil. Sounds, G.F. Spell and a gallery of curse-chewing enemies are loose again in a fun-to-horror of Mad humor, beauty and breasts that have made more a household name in every points around the world. Book Sally Forth 2, for $3.50 plus 50. She's quite a heroine!

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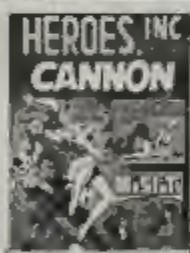

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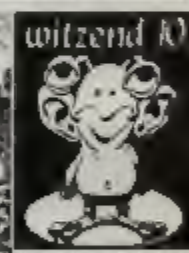
Former Marvel Comics staffer Pat Mastroianni lives in New York, "the big apple," and as an underground publisher has decided to pay tribute to her chosen city, done by Aparo, Wood, Williamson, Prang, Rowen, and more. Unusual, uncensored and unbowed, they tell a myriad of Manhattan melodramas in **Big Apple Comix**. Send a buck, see for yourself!



Alex Toth tightens the belt with a new 10-page tale, followed by Dick Giordano's 8-page Deathmate story without words, a Mike Ploog color portfolio, in addition to a cute-fantasy satire by Mike Zeck and a funny promises sound are already page by Joe Staton and Rich Corbi. All this, plus Wally Wood fix in your **Witzend** now. $3.00 plus .50 postage.

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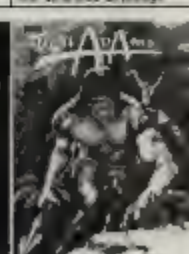

The checklist section accurately pinpoints the appearance of every Adams comic story, magazine illustration, movie poster and paperback cover. The portfolio features dozens of rare and unpublished pieces, while the interview section details a special series-by-series view of the great pen his work. Deluxe bonuses full-color covers and [illegible] $5. plus .50 postage.

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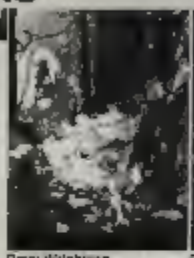

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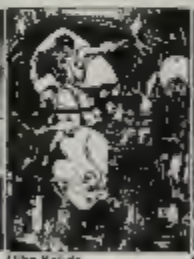

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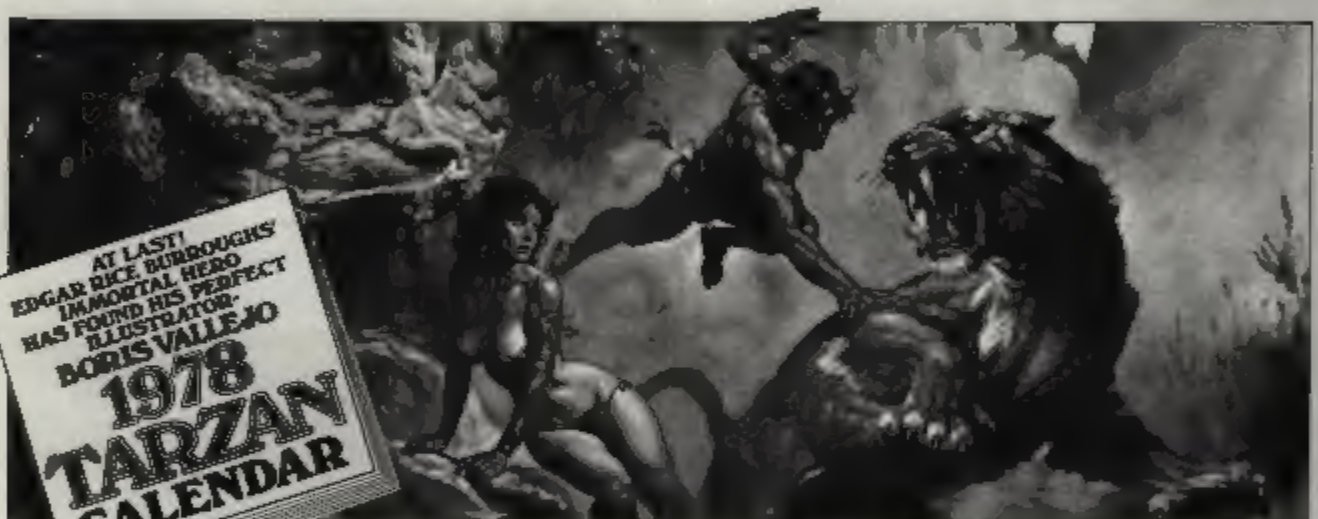

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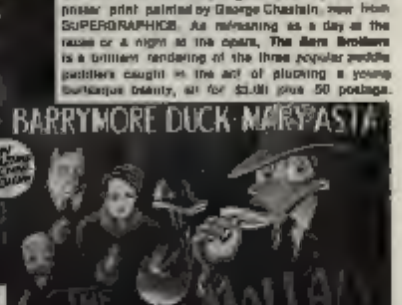
STAR TREK SPACE: 1999 DOCTOR WHO SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN BIONIC WOMAN PLANET OF THE APES

If you think you've seen everything, you're in for a surprise! We've just received our first shipment of SCI-FI MONTHLY, an exciting, new magazine devoted exclusively to the television entertainment of science fiction. They're all here: Spock, Kirk and the whole Enterprise crew from Star Trek; Steve Austin, the Six Million Dollar Man; Dr. Who and the Daleks; the star-crossed heroes of Land of Space; the beautiful Bionic Woman, the apes of Planet of the Apes; Space 1999—and more! SCI-FI MONTHLY is a high-quality television-based magazine printed in full-color on slick paper, and features dozens of stories and the most dynamic art this side of Andromeda.

SCI-FI MONTHLY is imported from England—and is guaranteed to be one of the best-produced magazines of its kind anywhere. Every issue covers the TV SF field with extensive articles and interviews—and is packed with full-page pin-ups of the characters involved, plus detailed schematics of their ships, weaponry and other interplanetary devices. In addition, each magazine's contents-filled 8 x 11 opening 17" x 22½" color poster. The best feature about SCI-FI MONTHLY is the price—only $1.50 an issue! Our supply is, of course, limited—and all sales are on a first-come, first-served basis. Send your order today while supplies last!

Wrestle with Barrymore Duck through the twisted alleys of text-play and quack-action seduction in: **The Hollow Mallard.** Barrymore lends with his back, and doesn't mind stepping on a few waistcoat toes in his search for the mythic black bird. **The Hollow Mallard** is painted by George Chastain, 30x38" and available for just $5.00 plus .50 postage.



It's **The Barx Brothers**, a giant (20x28") full-color poster print painted by George Chastain, new from SUPERGRAPHICS. As menacing as a day at the races or a night at the opera, **The Barx Brothers** is a brilliant rendering of the three popular poodle peddlers caught in the act of plucking a young buttercup beauty, all for $3.00 plus .50 postage.

A

B

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BARRY SMITH

A) CONAN — The spectacle! The savagery! The supernatural! Reproduced actual size (20"x23"), this is Smith's first new visualization of the invincible barbarian, Conan, $3.00 plus .75

B) THE GORBLIMEY PRESS CATALOG is a two-year time capsule portfolio of Barry Smith's published works in 1974 and 1975, most of which are out of print. The book is 8½" x 11" with all pieces presented full page size. Smith has included a penetrating 4500 word critique on the progress and purpose of Gorblimey Press. Printed in two colors throughout, the GbP Catalog is $3.50 plus .50.

C) WHITHERING—a breathtakingly realistic black and white print of a demonic deathshead vision. A superior achievement of intricate detail, **Whithering** is 16" x 20" for $2.50 plus .50 postage.

D) THE LORD OF THE BLACK CORSAIRS is Smith's newest and most strikingly savage poster to date. Reproduced same-size (18x24") and in blazing full-color, **Lord of the Black Corsairs** is a dazzling display of barbaric might for $4.00 plus .50 postage.

E) THE MOON & STAR BOOKMARKS are 9" high, and come in two different sets of five, with color borders. Tuck them in your favorite Conan novel or mat and frame them collectively. *Red* is a striking savage beauty brandishing sword and spear. *Blue* is a sequential midnight dance by a near-naked maiden. Order by color, $1.50 each, both for $2.50.

F) BOOK OF SAMOTHRACE Reproduced original size (24" x 30"), this print is a fascinating conceptual presentation in six colors. The signed and numbered edition is $12.00 plus $2.00 postage and insurance. Unsigned is $8.00 plus .50.

G) THE ENCHANTMENT is an unearthly, enigmatic and evocative probe into the universal mystery of reincarnation. The **Enchantment** is in full color, measures 13"x25", and is the last of a limited signed edition of 1500. $6.50 plus $1.00

H) PANDORA A curiosity must be satisfied . . . Smith captures this moment in a full-color print with a wide gold border. 24½" x 24½" in an octagonal format, these are the last of 1500 signed editions, mailed flat for $20.00 plus $2.00 postage, insurance.

I) DEVIL'S LAKE is an exceptionally beautiful and haunting print, in full-color on quality paper. An overpowering 25" x 25". **The Devil's Lake** is available unsigned for $5.00 plus .50, or signed and numbered, printed on heavier paper, and mailed flat and insured for $20.00 plus $2.00

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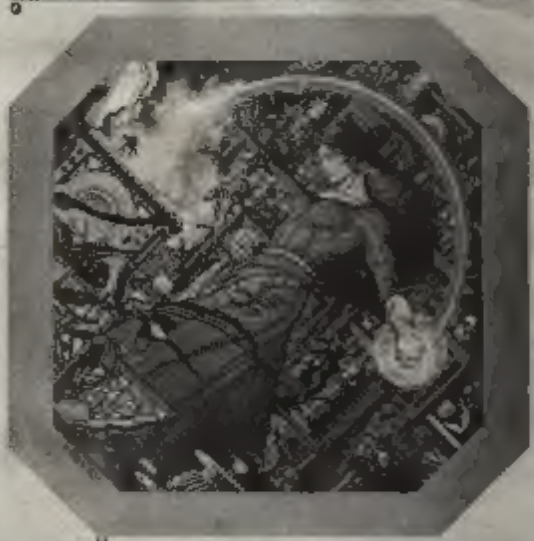
G



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